

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthbeat

Nurse anesthesia program gets maximum accreditation

The nurse anesthesia program at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center was awarded a 10-year accreditation by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs.

The council recognized the program's achievement by noting on the review that "...very few programs are granted accreditation with no progress report required. Even fewer programs have achieved the maximum accreditation of ten years."

Michael Rieker, D.N.P. (Doctor of Nursing Practice), C.R.N.A., director of the nurse anesthesia program, said, "This accreditation period is the maximum possible under our accreditation system and speaks very highly of the quality of our program."

U.S. News and World Report ranked the program among the top 10 anesthesia programs in the country. The nurse anesthesia program, the oldest in North Carolina and one of the oldest in the country, has graduated more than 600 nurse anesthetists since 1942. Nearly 100 applicants, from all over the country, are interviewed each year for the program's 25 available positions.

Historically the program has received maximum accreditation since 1952 and its graduates have achieved outstanding success on their certifying board exams.

Rhode Island latest state to legalize medical marijuana

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) - Rhode Island on Tuesday became the 11th state to legalize medical marijuana and the first since the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in June that patients who use the drug can still be prosecuted under federal law.

The House overrode a veto by Gov. Don Carcieri 59-13, allowing people with illnesses such as cancer and AIDS to grow up to 12 marijuana plants or buy 2.5 ounces of marijuana to relieve their symptoms. Those who do are required to register with the state and get an identification card.

Federal law prohibits any use of marijuana, but Maine, Vermont, Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Washington allow it to be grown and used for medicinal purposes.

The U.S. high court ruled June 6 that people who smoke marijuana because their doctors recommend it can still be prosecuted under federal drug laws, even if their states allow it.

Federal authorities, however, have conceded they are unlikely to prosecute many medicinal marijuana users.

"I'm sure everybody in this room knows at least one person who would have benefited from medical marijuana," Rep. Thomas Slater, who has cancer, told fellow lawmakers before the vote. Slater said he doesn't use marijuana now but it could become part of his treatment in the future.

Professor searches for fibromyalgia subjects for study

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is recruiting male participants for its exercise, fibromyalgia program. Men diagnosed with fibromyalgia are encouraged to inquire. Women will be recruited in the near future.

Participation in the program is free. For more information and a phone interview, call the program's director, Dr. Bill Karper, at (336) 334-3035 or via e-mail at wkarper@uncg.edu.

Gay 'cure' doctor dies

NEW YORK (AP) - Charles Socarides, the psychiatrist famous for insisting that homosexuality was a treatable illness and who claimed to have "cured" hundreds, has died. He was 83.

Socarides died Dec. 25 of heart failure at a hospital near his Manhattan home, his family announced. A funeral Mass was held Friday.

He waged an unsuccessful battle to reverse the American Psychiatric Association's 1973 decision to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders and brushed off frequent condemnations by colleagues who considered his views harmful.

"Gays ascribe their condition to God, but he should not have to take that rap, any more than he should be blamed for the existence of other man-made maladies — like war," he wrote in the Catholic weekly magazine *America* in 1995.

Socarides persisted in his views despite having a gay son, Richard, who became an adviser to President Clinton on gay and lesbian affairs.

In the 1990s, he was among the founders of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality, a nonprofit group based in Encino, Calif., "dedicated to affirming a complementary, male-female model of gender and sexuality."

A native of Brockton, Mass., Socarides decided he wanted to become a psychoanalyst at age 13 after reading a book on the life of Sigmund Freud. He graduated from Harvard College, earned his medical degree at New York Medical College, and got a certificate in psychoanalytic medicine at Columbia University. He taught at The Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Besides his son, he is survived by his wife, Claire; another son; two daughters; and one grandchild.



ACS reorganizes to provide better service

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

AIDS Care Service recently announced the following promotions and additions to its staff.

Promotions within the organization are: Christine Jolly, executive director, formerly associate director; Cindy Stubblefield, community relations director, formerly development officer; Mona Gary, business office manager, formerly office manager.

Additions to the agency are Katherine Foster, Andre Brown, Heather Hamby and Alberto Moreno-Bravo. Each new staff

member brings the experience and dedication to ensure that AIDS Care Service sustains and expands the services provided to those in our community who are living with HIV.

Katherine Foster, formerly with LISC, joins AIDS Care Service as associate director of programs and oversees all areas that provide services to clients. Andre Brown, former site coordinator at NC A&T State University, will provide continuum-of-care support services, including access to housing,

basic skills training and prevention therapy to HIV+ individuals and their families.

Heather Hamby, former shelter manager with Randolph County Battered Women Shelter, is the Holly Haven administrator, coordinating all facets of the family care home. Alberto Moreno-Bravo, former on-site manager for Debbie's Staffing Agency, is the Latino community coordinator, recruiting and training volunteers to provide HIV education and prevention information in Spanish.

The mission of AIDS Care Service Inc. is to help our brothers and sisters living with HIV disease improve their quality of life. After more than 11 years of providing care in Forsyth County, ACS meets the needs of HIV+ persons through a number of programs, including housing, supportive services, Positive Action Club, Latino client health education, Holly Haven Family Care Home, and the food pantry. More than 450 individuals received services through one of these programs in the past year.

FACTS ABOUT ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS

Each year, more than 40,000 adults die from vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, hepatitis A and B, and influenza! According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African-Americans have one of the lowest adult immunization rates compared with other racial and ethnic subgroups. Given the current statistics, there is a great need to increase awareness of adult immunizations and when they should be administered in the African-American community.

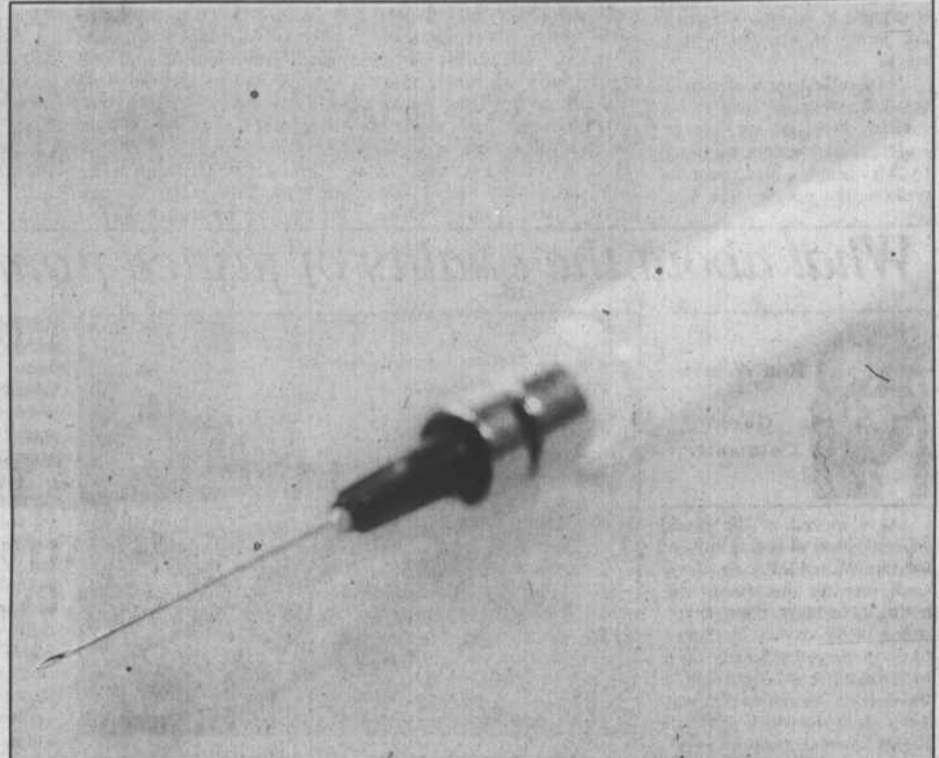
Did you know that before the modern era of vaccines the only way you could be protected from certain diseases was if you actually came down with that disease? Of course, this instance assumed you survived the illness in the first place, and many people did not.

You may have read about the Plague that wiped out vast numbers of people back in the Middle Ages. Well, we have come a long way. In the last column on vaccines, we discussed the origin of the word "vaccine" and how it was discovered that exposure to cowpox provided protection against another, more serious disease: smallpox.

Today we have many more vaccines that allow us to develop immunity to a variety of diseases caused by viruses and bacteria. Now, let's review some key facts about adult immunizations.

How Immunizations Work and Their Safety

There are a number of misconceptions



Vaccines fall into two categories: live attenuated and the dead inactivated. A live attenuated vaccine contains a virus that, although living, has been altered so it can no longer cause disease. It does, however, stimulate the immune system to produce antibodies, or immunoglobulins (Ig), just as a real virus would. A dead-inactivated virus vaccination causes the immune system to develop protection in a similar manner. When we come in contact with the real virus or bacteria, our immune system is activated and we are able to mount an effective defense, thereby avoiding the more serious disease.

Some people mistakenly believe that receiving a vaccination will increase their likelihood of contracting the disease. This assumption could not be more wrong. Others refuse vaccinations because they fear side effects, which include local tenderness, redness, swelling, and low-grade fever.

However, oftentimes adverse reactions are not attributed to the vaccine itself, but rather to trace amounts of substances found within the vaccine. Individuals with allergies to eggs, egg proteins, neomycin, or streptomycin should not receive certain vaccines. Also, individuals who have had previous episodes of hypersensitivity fol-

lowing prior contact with a vaccine or its components (anaphylaxis) or neurologic complications may not be good candidates for certain vaccines.

It is important to discuss any allergies or other important health information with your doctor before receiving any immunizations.

When to Receive Recommended Immunizations

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends the following adult immunization schedule:

See Immunizations on A9

Study: Low-fat, high-carb diet may not work

BY CARLA K. JOHNSON
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO - Older women who ate less fat and more carbohydrates lost about 2 pounds over seven years, a large study showed.

While one obesity expert called the results disappointing, the lead author of the research said it refutes claims by promoters of the Atkins and Zone diets that low-fat diets are partly behind America's obesity epidemic.

"It will help people to understand that the weight gain we're seeing in this country is not caused by the lower-fat diets," said study author Barbara V. Howard of MedStar Research Institute, a nonprofit research group.

However, the skimpy weight loss after seven years won't satisfy people looking for a cure for obesity, said Dr. Michael Dansinger, an obesity researcher at Tufts New England Medical Center who was not involved in the study.

"This is like losing the Super Bowl but claiming a second-place victory," Dansinger said. "The results are disappointing in the context of a country trying to battle obesity."

The study, appearing in Wednesday's *Journal of the American Medical Association*, included more than 48,000



The weight loss effectiveness of low-fat, high carb foods like pasta is at issue.

women aged 50 to 79. They were followed for an average of seven years and six months.

One group of women lowered the fat in their diets while increasing fruits, vegetables and whole grains. The other group didn't change their diets significantly.

The target fat content of the diet was 20 percent, but the women on the diet actually

got about 30 percent of their calories in fat; their previous fat intake was about 39 percent.

The women on the diet increased their carb calories from 44 percent to 53 percent, while the women not on the diet stayed at

See Diet on A9