



TANG CENTER

BEAR TALK

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES

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Ask the Expert

I want to lose weight. Is it okay to use dietary supplements?

Tang Center dietitian Helen Pak answers questions about dietary supplements.

Can you recommend any diet supplements that are safe and really work?

Simple answer—no. Just because a supplement is on the market does not mean it has been shown to work. The only requirement is that it not harm you. Diet pills contain ingredients such as caffeine and other so-called natural products that act as a diuretic or stimulant. Your body is made up of over 60% water. Diuretics will drain your body of much needed fluids to

cause temporary water loss, but no true weight loss. Stimulants speed up your metabolism but also speed up your heart rate. When you combine physical activity with stimulants, your heart works overtime and the result can be deadly. The supplement industry and their congressional supporters have blocked the FDA's proposal to limit certain ingredients and post warning labels. Word to the wise, if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. There is no miracle pill for weight loss, just healthful eating, exercise, and vigilance.

See "Ask the Expert," back page

If you had \$1,000 to spend

on the issue of excessive alcohol use on campus, what would you do?

That was the question for four student groups who applied and received funds through Health Promotion at UHS for projects addressing student alcohol use.

In two cases, students used the money toward carrying out Cal Corp sponsored "Alternative Spring Breaks" that encourage a more constructive use of spring breaks than the classic beer-laden beach scene.

Rachelle Callenback, a molecular environmental biology major, led a group of fellow Cal students on a tour of the Bay Area from Marin to San

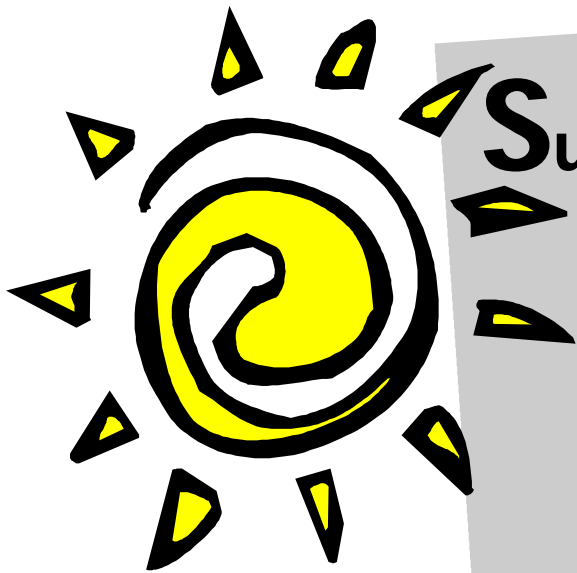


Rachelle Callenback (second from left) and friends enjoying alternative spring break.

Jose, visiting, learning from and volunteering for various environmental organizations. Among the highlights was staying at the youth hostel in the Marin Headlands, where they joined 30 fifth graders for a long hike through the beautiful surroundings.

See "Students," back page





Summer's Coming...Be Ready

There are a few healthcare-related items to think about (and do!) before summer gets here. Be sure you...

- ◆ **Schedule** needed medical or GYN appointments well in advance.
- ◆ **Refill** your prescriptions before eligibility ends.
- ◆ **Arrange** for travel immunizations/consultations in advance. The Hepatitis A vaccine, for instance, is most effective when you have it four weeks in advance.
- ◆ **Check** your medical insurance options if you are graduating. Your SHIP coverage ends August 14 at midnight.
- ◆ **Understand** your eligibility to use University Health Services during the summer, **May 26-August 15**:
 - ◆ If you are graduating, eligibility to use UHS ends August 14, 5 pm.
 - ◆ If you are a continuing student and have SHIP, eligibility to use UHS continues on the same fee schedule as during the school year.
 - ◆ If you are a continuing student without SHIP, whether or not you are enrolled in summer school, services at UHS are on a fee-for-service basis.

If you have questions about any of the above, please consult a clinic receptionist or email uhsadminofc@uhs.berkeley.edu.

This new form you're signing...

It's about your privacy

Your rights related to the privacy of your personal health information are enhanced by a new federal law.

As part of the law, student patients now will receive a Notice of Privacy Practices here at UHS, and a form to sign, indicating that you have received it.

The notice, which includes a list of your privacy rights, also is posted in locations throughout UHS and is available at any clinic reception desk and on the UHS website.

Other than the posting of your rights and signing the form, this does not represent a change in policy. Patient privacy and confidentiality have always been protected under UHS policy and state law. The additional measures fulfill the requirements of the federal law.

Moderate Increase for SHIP Premiums—But Still Best Buy

Students will be seeing moderate increases in Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) premiums in upcoming CARS bills—in the neighborhood of 20 percent.

"It's definitely not news we're pleased to announce," says UHS Director Steve Lustig, "but still better than the 30 to 40 percent increases we're seeing in the overall health insurance industry."

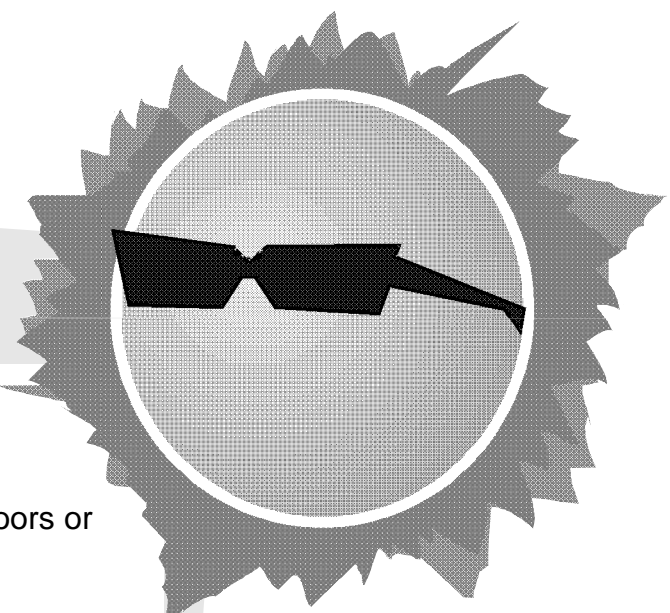
There are several reasons for the increase, according to Heather Pineda, health plan administrator at UHS. One is that Alta Bates, the principal hospital used by SHIP members, is now part of the Sutter Health Corporation, which has negotiated a higher level of reimbursement from Blue Cross, the SHIP provider.

In addition, SHIP utilization, as well as

health care costs in general, have gone up. In order to keep the cost increases as low as possible, there also will be some adjustments in benefits.

"The good news," says Pineda, "is that SHIP still is provided at about half the cost of comparable plans in the community. And SHIP has one of the strongest benefits plan in the entire UC system."

Take this Sun Safety Quiz



- T-F:** Everyone, regardless of skin color, is at risk for skin cancer.
- T-F:** Overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays outdoors or in a tanning salon can cause skin cancer.
- T-F:** UV rays are greatest in the summer.
- T-F:** A tan is a sign of skin injury (after UV rays enter the skin, the skin protects itself by producing more pigment or melanin).
- T-F:** It's important to use sunscreen year round, since UV rays can penetrate clouds, mist and fog.
- T-F:** Damaging UV rays reflect off water, sand, concrete and snow.
- T-F:** When your shadow is shorter than you are, the sun's rays are at their strongest.
- T-F:** If a person's skin normally burns in 10 minutes, then a sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 would protect him/her for 150 minutes (SPF15 x 10 minutes = 150)
- T-F:** Experts recommend choosing a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.
- T-F:** Apply sunscreen about 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapply every couple of hours.
- T-F:** Dark colored clothes offer more sun protection than light colored ones.
- T-F:** Some medications make your skin more sensitive to the sun—check with your clinician or pharmacist.

: Still wondering : what to do : with your life?

As the semester winds down, thoughts may be forming in your head such as "Where is all this leading?"

If you don't have a clear picture of what the future holds, careerwise, you are not alone, according to Chris McLean, PhD, coordinator of the career counseling program at UHS. "Most students arrive at college with a rather narrow set of career options in mind," he says. In addition, many students' interests, values and preferences are still evolving, making it complicated to choose a definitive career path.

This can be stressful!

That is why the counseling services at UHS include a career counseling program. It offers testing to help identify your interests and aptitude, professional counseling to help interpret them, and a library where you can match your personal information with career options. But don't procrastinate. "As much as it is a time for learning, college also is a time for exploration," says McLean. The earlier you start, the more time you will have to explore, test things out, talk with people, and get yourself on the path to a future that fits.

See the counseling section on the UHS website for more information.

ANSWER KEY: All answers are true! Come by the Self-Care Resource Center on the 2nd floor of the Tang Center for a free sample of sunscreen.

Ask the Expert

(from front page)

Is it possible to get too many vitamins and minerals?

It is rare to reach toxic levels with the water-soluble B and C vitamins, since your body gets rid of the excess through natural, daily water loss. The fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K are more dangerous in large amounts because they are stored in your body. Bear in mind that every vitamin and mineral plays a very specific and unique role in the body, and mega-dosing one will not compensate for a deficiency of another. Also, mega-dosing certain vitamins or minerals may prohibit others from being properly absorbed. If you have at least five fresh fruits or vegetables per day, taking a multi-vitamin supplement may not be necessary. If you want to take additional vitamin supplements, follow the amounts recommended on the box and take a multi-vitamin rather than specific ones. If you think you have a specific deficiency, ask your health care provider or dietitian.

Helen Pak's Recommendations:

5 Favorite Books on Weight Loss

In no specific order:

1. ***Eating Well, Living Well: When You Can't Diet Anymore*** by Glenn Gaesser, PhD, and Karin Kratina MA, RD. Focuses on eating well, getting active, and feeling good.
2. ***The Zen of Eating: Ancient Answers to Modern Weight Problems*** by Ronna Kabatznick, PhD. Addresses appetite and offers peace of mind and heart. Spiritual without being religious, with a practical approach to gentle, mindful eating.
3. ***Intuitive Eating: A Recovery Book for the Chronic Dieter*** by Evelyn Tribole MS, RD and Elyse Resch MS, RD. Written by registered dietitians, this book focuses on achieving a healthy, natural weight and accepting your body.
4. ***Eat more, Weigh Less*** by Dean Ornish, MD. Offers a low-fat vegetarian dietary approach to help with weight loss and to reverse heart disease.
5. ***Get with the Program!*** By Bob Greene. Focuses more on exercise than eating. Emphasis on fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Students

(from front page)

Anna Oursler, a development studies and architecture major, took eleven students to the Watts and Compton areas of Los Angeles for their project "Creative Work and Reclaiming L.A" —focusing on public entities in urban spaces. "We were looking at who has access to public spaces, how these spaces could be improved, how residents can make changes." They also rolled up their sleeves and pitched in to help make some of these improvements.

Another student, anthropology major Kathryn MacDonald, led a project in which her group from the campus BEARS Program (Berkeley Educates on Alcohol Responsibility Seminars)

made and passed out thousands of wallet cards—just in time for spring break—that list the DOs and DON'Ts of assisting someone who is intoxicated, and guidelines for calling for help. And finally, Scarlett Swerdlow, who heads the newly formed *Students for*

a Sensible Drug Policy on campus, organized an evening seminar on topics ranging from the physiological effects of excessive alcohol use to the second hand consequences for friends and roommates.

"It's exciting to see so many students willing to address the issue of excessive alcohol use among their own peer groups," says health educator Alberta Fischer, coordinator of the student projects program, which is funded by the federal Department of Education. "By creating a forum in which students can express and address their own concerns regarding this topic, we hope that the silent majority of students who use alcohol responsibly or not at all will find their voice and be able to slowly change the perception that excessive alcohol use is the social norm."

DOs and DON'Ts of Assisting Intoxicated Individuals

- ◆ Don't give them food, drugs, coffee or other stimulants
- ◆ Don't put them in a cold shower (They may go into shock)
- ◆ Don't encourage or induce vomiting
- ◆ Don't laugh, ridicule or provoke them
- ◆ Don't leave them alone to "sleep it off"
- ◆ Do make them as comfortable and safe as possible
- ◆ Do give them water (only if they can hold a cup or straw)
- ◆ Do stay with and monitor them until you are sure they are sobering up

Adapted from the "Safe Drinking" wallet card

When should you call 911?
 If the individual is:

- ◆ breathing 8 or fewer breaths per minute
- ◆ passed out and vomiting
- ◆ unresponsive and can't be awakened; and/or
- ◆ If skin appears cold, bluish, pale or sweaty