

STIs on the march in Alberta

Despite increased access to sexual health education, infections such as gonorrhea and syphilis continue to be prevalent in the Capital Health region

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The Capital Health region is experiencing outbreaks of several Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), most notably gonorrhea and syphilis.

According to Dr Ameeta Singh, an infectious disease assistant professor at the University of Alberta, the region is experiencing an increase in STIs even when condoms and STI tests are readily available because people have simply become complacent.

"In order for condoms to work, of course, they have to be used," she said. "And our suspicion is that they are not being used. People are bored about hearing about condoms and the need to protect themselves."

Dr Singh noted that in 2005, there were 175 newly diagnosed cases of HIV in the province, while in 2006 there were 218, with a quarter of the new cases being people under the age of 29. However, Singh said that the real change is how the HIV infection is being spread.

"If we look at the breakdown of the cases, until four years ago, about 40 per cent [of] most new HIV infections were from injection drug use. But in the last four years, about 80 per cent of the new infections were sexually trans-

mitted," Singh explained. "So we have seen a very significant rise in the transmission of HIV. This is directly linked to what is happening with other STIs."

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SAMANTHA STASIUK
STUDENTS' INTERNATIONAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION CO-CHAIR

Samantha Stasiuk, co-chair of the Students' International Health Association, believes it's because our generation is no longer worried about STIs. With misconceptions about them circulating and so many treatments available, Stasiuk said that it's causing people to become naïve about the issue.

"It shows that people aren't using protection when they are engaging in intercourse, which shows that people aren't scared," Stasiuk explained.

"They think that all STIs are treatable, and they're not. You can treat the bacterial ones, but you can never get rid of the viral ones. And you never know when you're infected. Lots of people can live for years with HIV and not know."

She speculated that the reason people aren't concerned with STIs is because the upcoming generations did not live through events such as the 80s AIDS scare, where contracting HIV would have been a death sentence.

"Currently it's [HIV], a chronic and manageable syndrome that people have, and there are so many medications out there, people think they are secure when they are not."

Singh advised that in addition to condoms, people should take regular STI tests, noting that at the health clinic, the tests are free, as is the medication for treatment. But he warned that attempting to deduce if a person has an STI by the way they look or by using a blood test isn't enough.

"All blood donated is routinely tested for HIV and syphilis, but it is not tested for anything else. So in order to be tested [for], for example, gonorrhea or chlamydia, you'd need a urine specimen," Singh said.

CAMPUS CRIME BEAT

Compiled by Cody Civiero and Natalie Climenhaga

REAR WINDOW

On 13 November, there was a theft from a vehicle parked on the west side of Mackenzie Hall. CSS received a call advising them that the vehicle had been broken into and the rear window smashed out. CSS attended and took a photo and witness statement. A face plate and CD deck were missing from the vehicle. The suspect is an unidentified male.

POT-BELLIED PERV

On 13 November at about 5:30pm, it was reported that a male followed a female student from the fifth-floor Centre Wing of the Biological Sciences building towards the elevator. The complainant pushed the button as the male waited by the floor and the male walked towards it, but noticed others were on the elevator and instead proceeded towards the Zoology wing. The suspect is described as Caucasian, 5'8", heavy-set, pot-bellied, 20-30 years old, with a brown beard, brown hair, and wearing dark clothes. The area was searched, but the male was not located.

FOR WHOM THE DELL STOLED?

At about 9:30am on 22 November, a student came into the CSS office to report that his laptop and accessories valued at approximately \$2000 had been stolen between 12:45pm-18:30pm the day before from the student study lounge in the Medical Sciences Building (MSB). The laptop is described as a black and silver Dell XPS M1210 with the serial number 3F2KMB1. Anyone with information on why someone would steal a computer that runs Windows is asked to call Campus Security.

LISTERLOUT

On 16 November at around midnight, an extremely intoxicated male was at seen

at the front doors of Lister Hall. He had attempted to enter a few times, and the cabs waiting outside wouldn't take him. CSS attended the area and recognized the male as having been previously escorted off campus. The individual was identified, and it was determined that he had several outstanding criminal warrants for his arrest. He was then arrested, and became combative with the officers. Finally, he was released into the custody of the EPS, and was also charged with trespassing.

THANKS FOR THE UPDATE

On 16 November at 11pm, a male attended the HUB Mall beat office to check in with the officer. He reported that he was "going to be good today." He had apparently spoken with CSS about ten years earlier.

HIT THE SHOWERS

On 22 November at 3:30pm, wallets, phones, and watches were stolen from the Clare Drake Arena change room. As one of the victims was in the process of cancelling his credit card, bank officials noticed it was being used at a store just off campus. The locker-room thief is described as a 20-year-old male with light complexion and short brown hair. He was last seen wearing a dark ball cap and a dark long sleeve shirt. CSS and EPS are investigating.

VENTING THEIR FRUSTRATIONS

On 25 November just after 1pm, two males were observed entering a construction area between the Heritage Medical Research Centre and the Medical Sciences building. After speaking with them, officers learned that the men had spent the night in the construction area near a heat vent. Both homeless men were warned against entering a secure area, before being escorted off campus.

FARE THEE WELL

On 25 November at 9:20am, a male was caught sleeping in a HUB Mall stairwell. Officers attended the area and identified the male as having no University affiliation and an extensive criminal record related to weapons. He received a warn-

ing and was directed off campus.

EARTH TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

On 25 November at about 2:30am, a fire alarm went off in International House after a fourth-floor smoke detector was activated. CSS attended the area, and fire trucks arrived a short time later. The smoke was cleared by the fire department, and the alarm was silenced after it was determined that the smoke had been caused by a naïve resident who had attempted to microwave an item wrapped in tin foil. The disgruntled and sleepy residents were then allowed to escape from the frigid cold and re-enter. There was no damage, other than to the microwave.

SUBZERO

On 25 November at midnight, officers located a male laying unconscious on a couch in SUB. CSS tried to wake the man; however, after getting no response, an ambulance was called to the scene and the snoozer was taken to the hospital. He has no University affiliation, and alcohol appears to have been a factor.

REDA-LRT

LRT security called in CSS after spotting an intoxicated and belligerent individual on 112 Street. Officers arrived on scene at the same time the male was being arrested by LRT Peace Officers. The male was identified as a current student, issued a public intoxication summons by LRT Peace Officers, and escorted back to his residence.

STEALING CANDY A BIG MAYBE

On 23 November just after 7pm, it was reported that a group of approximately four males were attempting to throw a candy machine out of the elevator on the 3rd floor of SUB. Officers attended the area and located a small, lightly damaged M&M candy machine inside the elevator that was believed to have been stolen from RATT. The Nerd burglars were last seen heading in the direction of the Clare Drake Arena. Campus Security identified a group of males fitting the profile of the sweet-toothed thieves; however, it was determined that they were unrelated to the theft. If you have any information, please contact Campus Security.

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monday-friday from 8am until 8pm

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GIVING AWAY A PAIR OF TICKETS TO EVERY OILERS HOME GAME!

tickets are given away at the beginning of the 3rd period for the next game. Must be present to win

» MONDAY, DEC. 3RD @ 8:30PM

oilers vs. kings
tickets given away to wednesday's game

» WEDNESDAY, DEC. 5TH @ 7:00PM

oilers vs. penguins
tickets given away to friday's (dec 7th game)

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wednesday, december 5th

MONDAYS - FOOTBALL FOLLOWED BY GUITAR HERO!

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TUESDAYS - DUB THAT DITTY!

the fun starts at 9 p.m.
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WEDNESDAYS - KARAOKE

With your hosts Colin and Ed!
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FRIDAYS

taking requests for any tunes that make you wanna dance!

HOURS

monday-friday | saturday
11AM-2AM | 3PM-2AM