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Brittany Rajchel

Education

Master in the Art of Mass Communication – Journalism, specializing in health news
University of Florida, Gainesville, August 2006 – August 2008

Bachelor of Science in Journalism – Reporting, Magna Cum Laude

Bachelor of Arts in History

University of Florida, Gainesville, August 2003 – May 2006

Experience

Reporter for Florida Health News

May 2007 - present – Report and edit news stories on public health, medical research and health policy for the online publication www.FloridaHealthNews.org.

Freelance writer for University of Florida Foundation magazines

January 2007 - present – Work on health features for UF alumni magazines.

Campus health columnist for the Gainesville Sun

August 2006 – August 2007 – Reported on medical, fitness and health issues facing the student body and Gainesville residents.

Lab Instructor for Writing for Mass Communication for the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida

August 2006 - present – Teach 40 students per semester how to develop, research, interview for and write news stories, features, sidebars, blogs, news releases and advertising copy. Involves extensive coaching and editing, including stories about health and science issues.

Writer for AlzOnline

August 2006 – May 2007 – Wrote features and press releases for Florida's elderly publications about the state-funded project that coaches caregivers of Alzheimer's and dementia through the Internet and the phone line.

Senior editor and writer for Orange and Blue Magazine – Florida's Food edition

January – May 2006 - Wrote features and coached/edited other writers covering food topics throughout the state, ranging from hog-hunting in North Florida to a lonely honey stand in Palatka. The magazine circulates throughout the state.

Stringer for the New York Times Company

May 2005 – May 2007 - Worked as a stringer for Gainesville Magazine, the Gainesville Sun city desk and features desk, and several other NYT's Company papers.

Fitness Instructor for University of Florida

January 2004 – present – Teach cycling, kickboxing, step, aerobics, boot camp, sculpting, strength training, circuit training, water exercise, outdoor training and various other hybrid formats. Develop routines and programs for small groups, athletes and individuals. Includes training, teaching and critiquing other instructors, as well as developing and teaching continuing education materials to them. AFAA certified since January 2005.

Computer Skills

Proficient in: Adobe Photoshop, Acrobat, InDesign, Dreamweaver, and Flash; Apple's Final Cut Pro; Audacity; Soundslides; Microsoft Office; many newsroom content management systems

Volunteer experience

Staff Counselor at Camp Boggy Creek, Eustis, Fla.

May 2006 – present– Worked with and developed fitness routines for children, ages 6 to 18, who had terminal or chronic illnesses, including cancer, tumors, rheumatoid arthritis, hemophilia, asthma, HIV/AIDS, immunological deficiencies, sickle cell anemia, heart disease, epilepsy, spina bifida, transplants, craniofacial disorders, Krohn's disease and more. Continue to assist with family retreat weekends.

Women's Interlocking Network

January 2005 – May 2006 – Co-founded a women's community organization that worked with pregnant adolescents, impoverished women and children, and Girl Scouts struggling with self-image and growing up.

References available upon request.

Table of Contents

Page 4. “Hands To Love” was a feature for *UF Today*, an alumni magazine for the University of Florida. I was responsible for all on-and off-location reporting, planning, writing and editing of the feature.

Page 8. “Dirty Little Secret” was a feature for *Orange & Blue* magazine’s food edition. I was responsible for all on-and off-location reporting, planning, writing and editing of the lead feature in the “Places” section.

Page 10. “How to get sweaty, not sick at campus gyms” was an article for my column, Gator Rx, written for the *Gainesville (Fla.) Sun*. I was responsible for all reporting, writing and editing of the column.

Page 11. “Drugs sold over the counter present dangers” was an article for my column, Gator Rx, written for the *Gainesville (Fla.) Sun*. I was responsible for all reporting, writing and editing of the column.

Online stories (not included in the PDF):

“Men’s Health Sports Injury Center” was package for *Men’s Health Online*. I assisted with reporting, writing and editing on the project. http://www.menshealth.com/sportsinjuries/groin_pull.html

“Budget cuts may reduce elective C-sections for Medicaid moms” was a story for FloridaHealthNews.org. I was responsible for all writing, reporting and editing on the story. <http://www.floridahealthnews.com/index.cfm/go/public.articleView/article/3277/top/true>



(hands to love)

At this weekend camp, children with hand deformities learn they're not so different after all.

by Brittany Rajchel (7JM)

Five-year-old Zachary Dench struggles to hit that sweet spot with his arrow on the target range. He pulls on a bow with his left hand. His father, Timothy, steadies it because Zachary is missing his right hand. Zachary lets go and the arrow flies, sailing past the target's blue, red and yellow rings. + "The arrow kept going and going and going over the thing," Zachary says, making broad soaring motions. He returns to his father for a second go at a bull's eye. + "Sometimes he asks about his arm, so we wanted him to see other kids like him," his mother, Laura, says. "I think we've accomplished our mission."

photography by Sarah Kiewel (BSJ '05)





The Denchs and 37 other families worked toward that mission this spring at the seventh annual Hands to Love camp, a family weekend getaway started and run by UF alumni. The camp embraces the concept of acceptance and puts it into play for families with children who have

congenital hand disorders.

The target range, for instance, has bows and arrows with adaptable devices so children like Zachary — who have an independent streak and a congenital hand disorder — can shoot on their own. However, lots of children prefer the standard method. The same goes with swimming, arts and crafts and the climbing tower, says camp volunteer Wendy Holt (BSOT '74), a former Shands hand therapist.

"If they really want to, they'll figure out a way to do it," she says. "Their fear just kind of goes away for the weekend, and they're just out there having a good time."

Thanks to her connections as a clinical adjunct professor at UF, Holt helps recruit occupational therapy students and staff to guide families through the weekend. She's so successful that Gators make up 84 percent of the manpower behind hand camp.

While she and fellow alumni might be giving of themselves, they are also getting more insight than they can learn in a classroom or hospital, she says.

"Watching these kids shoot basketballs really puts things in perspective," Holt says.

("I just don't feel alone here. People don't look at me weird here.")

That perspective could be seen on the faces of adults and children early one morning as they peered up at a 40-foot climbing tower with ropes and kids dangling all over it.

Kenned "Buddy" Morgan, an 8-year-old from Webster, clapped, stomped and screamed encouragement as his sister, Kayla, reached for each wooden peg, link of rope and plastic rock, pulling herself even higher up the tower than he had. He made it only halfway.

"I wanted to help her up," he says.

As the two siblings ate their tacos at lunch later that day, Kayla, in turn, cheered Buddy on as he recounted his tales of conquering demons most 8 year olds don't even know exist.

Buddy, often called "T-Rex" because of his "big head and small arms," rolls up his camouflage pants to show braces that reach past his knees. Buddy's congenital limb disorder makes his arms and legs smaller and differently shaped than other children's.

"I just don't feel alone here. People don't look at me weird here," he says.

Creating a feeling of belonging is the camp's goal, says Dr. Paul Dell (MD '71), chief of hand, upper extremity and microsurgery at UF & Shands Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Institute.

In 2000 he took a step toward caring for not just his patients' limbs but also their feelings as he and his wife, Ruthie, started the Hands to Love network. The annual camp is an offshoot of the original idea.

Children, their parents and siblings face social stigmas that surgery and occupational therapy can't fix, Dell says. "They have differences that are obvious to their peers" at places like school, but "kids with problems could see other kids with problems" at a place like hand camp, he says.

Pieces of the ceiling in Dell's examining room pay homage to this kind of soul medicine as children's handprints dance around overhead in purple, green and orange. Some of them have shortened fingers, some are missing pinkies or thumbs.

He remembers two years ago when Miss Mississippi, a congenital hand patient herself, came to camp and showed the little girls her hands. They crowded around her, staring up at her in awe. Meeting role models the children can relate to physically can give them something to focus on and goals to reach for, Dell says.

Not all role models are Miss Mississippi, though. Some are older campers and counselors.

"The older kids are there to say, 'Look at me. I'm doing OK,' and talk about the social and functional problems they've faced," he says.

Jackie Kenyon, an 18-year-old from Stevensville, Mich., has been a camper for six years and is training to be a counselor. As a toddler, she was a Shands patient with Dell when her family lived in North Fort Myers. She shares her story with younger children and their parents.

"I tell them, 'My hands are my normal. Make your hands your normal,'" she says.

The thing about hand camp, she says, is children come in with heads down and arms crossed, hiding their hands. By the time they

leave, their hands are free and swinging at their sides.

Kenyon's mother, Debra, also counsels parents on raising a child with different hands.

"There is nothing better than hand camp," she says. "I watch these kids come in here, and I just watch the weight of the world lift off their shoulders."

All the families attend the weekend-long camp free of charge.

Gator alumni raise the program's \$15,000 annual budget by sponsoring golf tournaments and spa nights. Tony Oyenarte (BSESS '96), Camp Crystal Lake's director, organizes the weekend at his facility.

"Hand camp gives parents an opportunity to see their kids do stuff that they didn't know they could do," he says.

Oyenarte pointed out Jesse Byrd, an 11-year-old from Miami who loves to swim in the camp's lake. Jesse fired one arrow after another on the target range, despite the fact he cannot use his right hand. After five years of camp and a newfound self-confidence, Jesse started attending regular summer camp at Crystal Lake.

"I wake up at 4 a.m. to get to camp, and we're the first ones here, or sometimes the fifth," Jesse says. "But my plan is to keep coming to camp. I've got longtime friends here. I think it's because they're like me. Yeah, they understand me." —

For more information, visit www.handstolove.org.



"Hands to Love is more than a camp," says co-founder Ruthie Dell. "It's a network for families." For information about its camps and additional resources including message boards and recommended references, visit www.handstolove.org or call 352-273-7382.





Photos By LAUREN MACDONALD

Dirty Little Secret

A weed among roses, this classic '50s-style sub shop shows even grime has its charm.

Kappy's continues to attract plenty of customers despite its unkempt appearance.

By BRITTANY RAJCHEL

Bob Caplan runs back and forth behind a scuffed counter, mixing hand-dipped milkshakes and pouring chili and coleslaw onto a "Chili Slaw Dog," a recipe as old as his old-fashioned, run-down sub shop.

"The spiciness from the chili combined with the sweetness of the coleslaw mixed with the flavor of the beef hot dog, oh! It's so good!" Caplan says.

Kappy's Submarine Shop is a Central Florida icon, as is Caplan, who bought the shop in 1972.

Ignore the 25 years of grime settled on the floor. Walk over the cracks in the foundation. Scrape away the hard-

ened schmutz on the wall-sized windows, left by both little and big hands holding tuna melts and pizza burgers. Caplan turns a profit in what many customers describe as the "local dive," despite some rather threatening competition.

Located only a few miles away from Winter Park Village in Maitland, a complex featuring reservation-only restaurants with five-star chefs, Kappy's is surrounded by pristine brick churches and upper-class neighborhoods. Driving down Orlando Avenue, you'll find sushi bars, fondue restaurants, and establishments with fine china and damask tablecloths —

all with price tags to match. Though Kappy's, on the other hand, looks as if it's ready to be demolished and replaced with a classy corner bistro, Caplan says his restaurant stands ready to serve another three generations of customers.

Customers from all walks of life approach the shop. Professionals decked out in business suits and construction workers wearing steal-toed boots wait in the lunch-hour rush on a Friday. "We get them all: doctors, lawyers and Indian chiefs," Caplan says.

A cashier, a fast-order cook, and Caplan scurry about behind the count-

er, preparing burgers, frying onion rings and whipping up the Kappy's favorite — the Cheese Steak 'N Onions.

"As far as I know, I'm the first to introduce this kind of meat on a sandwich around here," he says.

Troy Hager is one of the old-time fans of Caplan's cheesesteak. "The place is forever a legend," Hager says. "My wife and I have been coming here since she was in high school, and she's not so young, ya know? And I always get the cheesesteak. They practically patented that sandwich around here."

Even on Saturday mornings, local residents are waiting in the spaces before the shop opens at 10:30 a.m.

"I don't see any point in changing it," Caplan says. "Nostalgia is what sells people on this place today."

Nostalgia also was part of the reason Caplan bought the restaurant back in 1972. As a Philadelphia native, Caplan helped his parents run a sub shop in Atlantic City, but after moving down to Maitland he had a hard time finding the kinds of hoagies he ate in the Northeast until he stumbled upon Kappy's.

The rest of the reason was just coincidence, he says.

"I bought it from a man named Itch Kaplan because we both had the same last name," he says. Caplan kept spelling the shop's name with a 'K' in memory of Kaplan, who ran the restaurant before him for about five



Kappy's hoagies can accommodate those who like it hot.

years.

The entire restaurant — which barely holds 15 people — was shipped in one piece on a flat-bed truck to the property back in the early 1960s, when a Texas hamburger chain called Whataburger opened where Kappy's now stands. The counter, grill, fryer and shake machine were already assembled, attached in one piece and shipped in on a flatbed truck. Even the awning, which provides shade for outside diners because the lot does not have a tree in sight, came in with the

rest of the shop.

One diner under the awning, Emilie Davis, 16, got out of bed just to head down the road for a Kappy's cheesesteak on Saturday morning. She and her two look out of place, having driven up in a red convertible, sporting expensive earrings and handbags, before plopping down on a teetering plastic picnic table with their bags of greasy comfort food.

Caplan's food and shop aren't changing any time soon, as long as customers like Davis keep coming, Caplan says. Customers receive their food in brown paper bags or red plastic baskets lined with wax paper. He doesn't skip on any ingredients or any flavors, he says. There aren't any low-carb or low-fat options on his billboard menu. He'll keep serving food like fried mushrooms and tuna melts as long as people keep passing up his expensive competitor's grub to chow down at Kappy's.

For now, customers don't seem to mind, as the restaurant appears to have a sentimental place in Central Florida lore. Caplan points to a poster, hanging crooked next to the counter. The piece was drawn by a local artist in honor of Maitland's centennial. In the yellow, cartoon-ish drawing, the viewer can see a tiny, run-down, '50s drive-thru — Kappy's.

"After all, there is always room for Kappy's," says an employee, slapping her belly.

Kappy's charm comes from its hard-working employees and its plain appearance.



How to get sweaty, not sick at campus gyms

■ Students should exercise good hygiene to avoid spreading germs or caching them.

Legs spin around on stationary bicycles as arms pump back and forth on elliptical machines.

Knees bend and straighten, propelling bodies up and down the Stairmaster.

Meanwhile, skin drips sweat — down necks, backs and calves, finally falling on treadmills, barbells and exercise mats.

GATOR



BRITTANY RAJCHEL

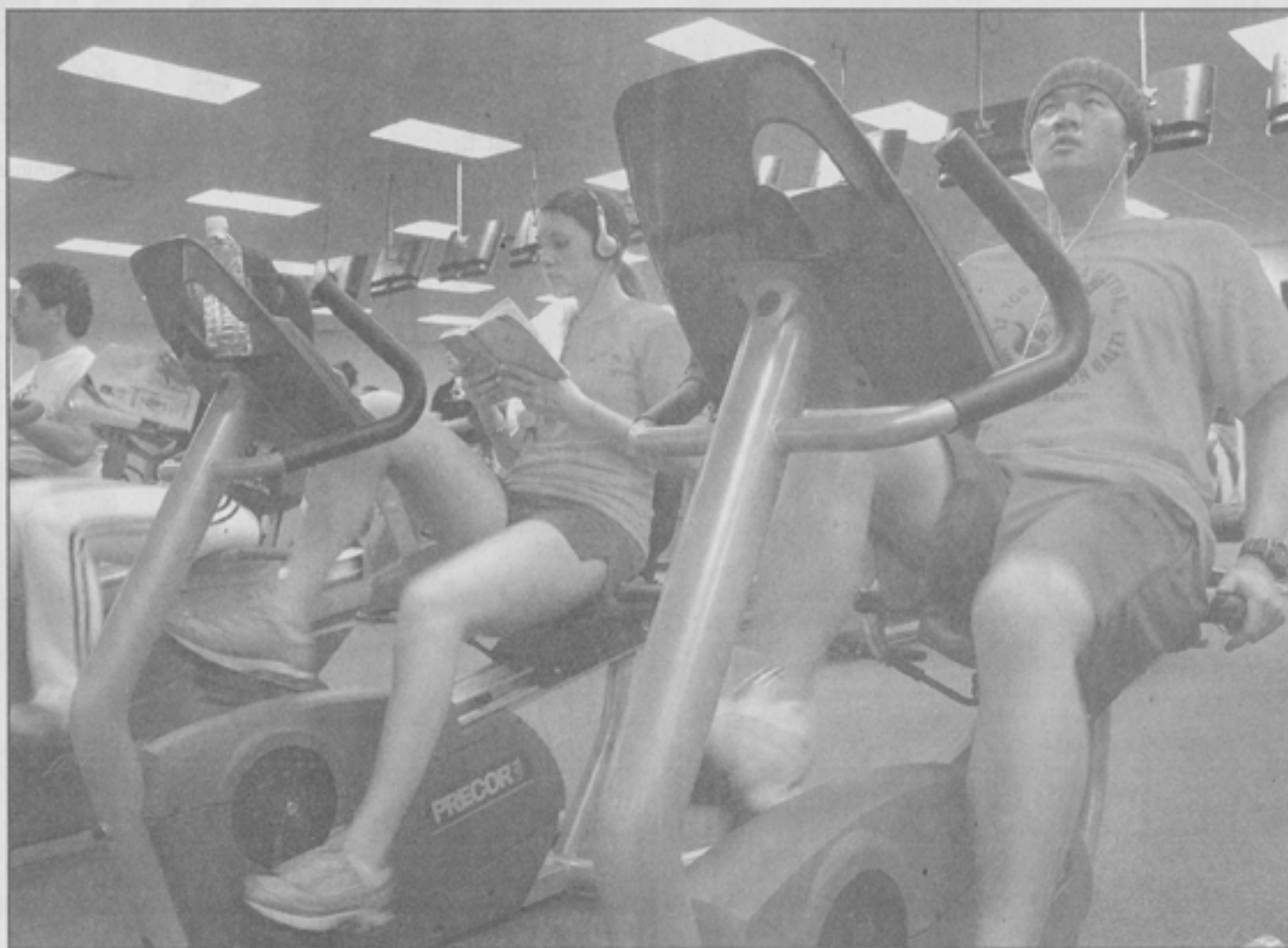
Students are piling into the University of Florida's fitness centers, motivated by dreams of a new body for the New Year and the ever-encroaching bikini season.

However, as they shed pounds and bring on a healthier lifestyle, students might also be exposing each other to germs and infections that are hard to avoid when so many bodies are sharing workout equipment.

"Historically, we always notice an increase of people around this time because of New Year's resolutions, and they normally continue coming through Spring Break," said Gary Zertrouer, assistant director of facilities for UF's Department of Recreational Sports.

Zertrouer said that the gym equipment is cleaned on a "regular basis" with disinfectants designed to kill germs and viruses, but he added that students need to take precautions to keep themselves healthy while working out in the crowded facilities.

"Students sneeze. There's nose drip, or whatever you want to call it," he said.



Jonathan Williams, 20, bikes while listening to music and watching sports on the television at Southwest Recreation Center on Thursday. At this time of year, it's common for many students to go to the gym and get sick.

"Students just need to practice normal good hygiene when they are in the rec centers."

The common cold and influenza are two viruses easily transmitted through simple, indirect contact with an infected person — a common practice in recreational facilities, according to the Mayo Clinic.

In essence, if someone — who happens to have a sniffle or cough — sweats or sneezes on a set of barbells in the morning, and you pick those barbells for your standard three sets of 15 bicep curls that

afternoon, you could be exposing yourself to the viruses, or infectious proteins that want to use your body's cells as birth centers for reproduction.

You help the virus along by touching your eyes, nose or mouth after handling those barbells.

Many students cart around hand towels, freely wiping their sweaty brows and then swiping off exercise machines before and after they use them, Zertrouer said.

Contact with moist fabrics, especially clothes and towels that have been exposed to

viruses found in body fluids, can be highly contagious, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Sweaty fabrics also transmit resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, more commonly known as "staph" — bacteria that causes skin welts and abscesses.

Most health and fitness centers don't have problems with staph, according a November study done by the Mayo Clinic, but athletes — amateur and professional — who share towels, clothes and toiletries are more inclined to have outbreaks.

Jessica Kelner, a 21-year-old animal biology student, uses UF gyms about four times a week — running on treadmills, lying on mats to do crunches and lifting weights.

Despite being an avid fan of exercise, she said she is not that afraid of catching anything, as she takes precaution to "touch only the buttons on the machines" and wash her hands when she leaves the gym.

"I mean, we're all exposed to like a bazillion bacteria all the time, and I really only get sick when I have a low immune

Tips to keep germs at bay in the gym

- Wipe down equipment before using with a sanitary wipe, or use a disinfectant spray
- Change clothes or shower after working out to wash away the germs
- Wash your hands when you use the restrooms
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze
- Don't come to the gym if sick and possibly infectious
- Wear flip flops in the locker room and showers
- Sit on a clean towel in the locker room (not directly on the bench)

system, like if I haven't been eating right or sleeping enough," said Kelner, who added that she comes down with the flu or a cold about once a semester.

To keep students from infecting each other with germ-y towels, the weight rooms and cardio rooms in all the gyms at UF now boast Gym Wipes, which are disposable, disinfectant wipes similar to those used in changing baby's diapers.

The wipes are kept in silver canisters, and the maker's Web site maintains that the wipes kill 99.9 percent of germs found on exercise surfaces, including *E. coli* and salmonella.

If you use "common sense," the gym is still a safe place to exercise, no matter how many people come traipsing in and out, Zertrouer said.

He asks students to throw away dirty Gym Wipes and not to clean off machines with their own sweaty hand towels.

"It's just normal, good hygiene," he said.

MARVIN HALELAMEN / Special to The Sun

On Campus

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW? Got something to say about what's happening on campus. E-mail us at hearmenow@gainesvillesun.com or call us at (352) 381-5610

WHAT'S UP

TODAY

- **Parking and Transportation Committee**, 232 Stadium, 2 p.m.
- **Gator Baseball vs. UCF**, McKethan Stadium at Perry Field, 6:30 p.m.
- **UF School of Music presents Faculty Recital: Brenda Smith - Voice**, University Auditorium, 7:30 p.m.
- **Canned Food Drive**, Reitz Union Colonnade, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **Student Senate Meeting**, Reitz Union Room 282, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

- **UF School of Music presents Symphonic Band Concert**, University Auditorium, 7:30 p.m. General admission, \$5; UF students free.
- **Showing of "Little Children,"** Reitz Union Cinema, 8 and 10:30 p.m. Visit the Phillips Center Box Office or call 352-392-ARTS for tickets.
- **TV on the Radio Concert**, Rion Ballroom, 9 p.m.
- **Talk by Mia Farrow on Datur**, Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, 8 p.m. Doors open 7:15 p.m. The show is free and open to the public, and seating will be on a first come, first serve basis.
- **Staceyann Chin, Def Jam poet**, Rion Ballroom, 8 p.m.

THURSDAY

- **Showing of "Little Children,"** Reitz Union Cinema, 8 and 10:30 p.m.
- **UFPA presents Hungarian State Folk Ensemble**, Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. Reserved seating: \$15-30. Open to the public. Visit the Phillips Center Box Office or call 352-392-ARTS for tickets.
- **UF School of Music presents**

Drugs sold over the counter present dangers

Consumers should be cautious about potential side effects

Over-the-counter drugs offer a variety of cures for what ails the average college student, including problems such as coughs, yeast infections and headaches.

But college-aged students, especially women, need to be careful and critical of emerging OTC drugs, health officials warn. Some could have negative consequences, despite the fact that the Food and Drug Administration deems them safe for use without the consent of a doctor.

The FDA has no systematic way of tracking negative effects of OTC drugs yet, so patient responsibility is important, said David Brushwood, University of Florida professor in pharmacy health-care administration.

Concerns arise, for example, when looking at the new OTC drug, Alli, made available this summer. Alli, pronounced "ally," is the first FDA-approved, OTC weight-loss drug.

The drug, taken with meals, blocks intestinal enzymes from digesting one-fourth of food's fat.

"Let's face it. There is pressure in our society to be thin," said Mary Ann Burg, associate professor of Community Health and



By
Brittany
Rajchel

GATOR

Family Medicine and former director of UF's Women's Health Research Center.

Weight-loss pills may seem like one route to get to that socially acceptable norm.

Yet, research shows that college-aged women diagnosed with bulimia can be frequent abusers of laxatives, or OTC stimulants that treat constipation, as a means to increase weight loss, Burg said.

Drugs treating more overt female concerns and problems have also made transitions from prescription to OTC, sometimes only after political pressure, said Phyllis Craig, nurse practitioner at the Women's Clinic at the Student Health Care Center.

In 1991, women were allowed buy treatment for yeast infections over the counter. And last fall, the morning-after pill, or Plan B contraception, won approval for OTC use after the FDA duked it out with Congress and its own advisory board.

"We have a lot less girls sitting on our doorstep Monday morning, and our emergency calls sure have gone down," Craig said. "I don't miss those 2 a.m. phone calls."

Morning-after pills became available upon request in January, after the manufacturer re-packaged and re-labeled the drug — a major concern of the FDA, Craig said.

"The FDA is a label-oriented organization," health administration professor Brushwood said. "They say, 'Can we write a label so clear, so easy to understand that a consumer can use it without medical assistance?'"

Clear labels describing safe usage are one of the primary factors the FDA uses to decide if a drug should be offered over the counter, Brushwood said. If the drug company can't provide a legible label, its product becomes prescription only.

It has to have adequate directions, warnings and advice that

consumers could understand and follow, he said.

Yet, even after precautions have been taken, the FDA could still have a problem on their hands.

"The truth is, every drug has side effects and the potential to cause harm," said Earlene Lipowski, an associate professor in the College of Pharmacy.

Both Lipowski and Brushwood agree that the FDA has no concrete, systematic method of catching abuse of OTC drugs.

The system in place now is completely voluntary, Brushwood said.

Here's how it works:

A patient takes a cough medicine, which gives him hives all over his body. Shocked and surprised, he goes to his doctor, explains what cough medicine he took and what happened to him.

The patient goes home, and the doctor has a choice. He can go about his day, or he can send a "moderator report" to the FDA, describing the patient's situation.

The FDA — if the patient isn't the only one with hives from this cough syrup — develops an aggregate of similar cases and if it becomes large enough, goes to the drug manufacturer to investigate what is happening.

Further research interprets whether that cough syrup stays on the market.

"You see, though, patients have a responsibility in all this as well. They have a responsibility to report adverse reactions" to a doctor, nurse, pharmacist or other health-care provider, Brushwood said.

The best way to use any drug — prescription or over the counter — is to check with a doctor first, women's health researcher Burg said.

Sometimes, going to a health practitioner, even if you know what you need, can help you in the future, as well, Craig said.

For instance, when the morning-after pill was only available by prescription, the Women's Clinic staff used to have ways of counseling sexual assault victims or setting up prescriptions for oral contraceptives so patients wouldn't need to use the morning-after pill again.

Even though she supports the drug being over the counter, it's harder to provide further help to patients who come in, pick up the drug and leave after only a minimal interaction with a pharmacist, Craig said.

"Find a doctor you trust, and talk to them," Burg said.