"In the News"

ALCOHOL NEWS

Alcohol During Pregnancy Endangers Fetus  (5/26/06)
Mothers who drink as little as half an alcoholic beverage a day can shave 7 points off of their newborn child's IQ. The research, published in the journal Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research, showed that any alcohol use during pregnancy puts unborn children at risk compared to those born to nondrinking mothers. "We don't really know that there is a safe level of drinking during pregnancy," said lead study author Jennifer Willford of the University of Pittsburgh. "Women need to know this, so they can plan accordingly when they are planning to get pregnant." While heavy drinking can lead to obvious cognitive defects associated with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, lower levels of drinking can also have serious, albeit subtle, effects on long-term development.

Alcohol and Suicide  (4/25/06, 9/11/06, 11/27/06)
People with alcohol-use disorders attempt suicide at a rate six to ten times greater than the general population according to researchers in Germany. The study also showed that up to 40 percent of people seeking treatment for alcohol problems had attempted suicide. In a study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a third of suicide victims had alcohol in their system, and about 10 percent tested positive for other drugs such as opiates, cocaine, marijuana, or amphetamines. Canada’s Center for Addiction and Mental Health found that the risk of suicide decreased when heavy drinkers joined Alcoholics Anonymous.

Vivitrol  (1/3/06)
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has granted conditional approval to Vivitrol, a once-a-month, injectable, naltrexone-based drug intended to curb craving for alcohol. Vivitrol may be particularly beneficial for patients with compliance issues. The developer of Vivitrol, Alkermes, Inc., has to provide the FDA with additional data on the drug and meet other requirements in order to get full approval for Vivitrol.

Funding in part provided by the City of Manhattan
**Young American Women Drinking Harder** *(4/28/06)*
According to a *Newsweek* report, more young American women are drinking to get drunk, and are putting themselves at risk by trying to “keep up with the boys” when it comes to alcohol use. Part of the problem is that women generally get intoxicated more easily than men. Heavy drinking females also can experience more serious health problems at an early age, and are known to be at higher risk for developing liver inflammation and dying from alcohol-related cirrhosis than men.

**Poor Eating Habits, Alcohol Overconsumption Linked** *(2/16/06)*
People who eat poorly also are more likely to drink unhealthy amounts of alcohol, according to researchers at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. The study found that those who drank the most alcohol had the poorest diets, while those who drank the least had the best diets. The findings held regardless of whether the heavy drinkers consumed large amounts of alcohol at single sittings or spread their heavy consumption over time.

### OTHER DRUG NEWS

**Researchers See Growing Youth Abuse of Caffeine** *(11/27/06)*
Nausea, vomiting, racing heartbeat, hallucinations, panic attacks, and chest pains are among the possible effects of ingesting too much caffeine, which has landed increasing numbers of young people in hospital emergency rooms. “Part of the problem is that people do not think of caffeine as a drug but rather as a food product,” said Danielle McCarthy of Northwestern University. Young people also often use caffeine pills that offer megadoses of caffeine to get high or stay awake. Caffeine stimulants the release of internal catecholamines that induce anxiety, jitteriness and the fight-or-flight response.

**Daily Pot Smokers Risk Psychosis** *(12/13/05)*
Researchers from Canterbury University in New Zealand have found that daily marijuana smokers are at an elevated risk of suffering psychotic symptoms such as paranoia, hearing voices, and feelings of isolation. Occasional use of marijuana likely would not cause similar problems, researchers added.

**Heavy Teen Marijuana Use Causes Brain Changes** *(12/8/05)*
Researchers at North Shore University Hospital in New York have found that adolescents who are heavy users of marijuana exhibit changes in their brain similar to those found in schizophrenics. They found that a region of the brain called the arcuate nucleus was atrophied in both marijuana users and those with schizophrenia. The study may lend credence to the theory that marijuana use could trigger schizophrenia.

**Ecstasy Can Quickly Hurt Brain** *(12/4/06)*
University of Amsterdam researchers report that human brain cells can be altered and damaged by low doses of ecstasy, leading to reduced blood flow to the brain. Their new study finds that even first-time users of ecstasy experience a decrease in verbal memory, and that taking just a few doses of the drug causes brain changes that can be seen 18 months after first use.
More Treatment Admissions for Meth, Prescription Drugs  (4/25/06)
The number of people admitted to addiction treatment programs for methamphetamine use rose 25 percent between 2002 and 2004, while treatment admissions for misuse of narcotic pain medications rose 42 percent during the same period, according to new research from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Prescription Painkillers Becoming More Popular than Marijuana  (10/30/06)
Marijuana has long been the most popular illicit drug in the U.S., but federal researchers say that there are now more new recreational users of prescription painkillers than new pot smokers. The SAMHSA study estimated that about 2.7 million people ages 12 and older start misusing prescription drugs each year, compared to an estimated 2.1 million new users of marijuana.

Drinking Teens More Likely to Be Violent  (10/3/06)
Researcher from the University of Cardiff in Wales found that young people are not only more likely to be violent, but also to be victims of violence. They found that 11- to 16-year-olds who drank alcohol were more likely to hit others, be hit by others, and engage in fighting. This study shows a direct link between alcohol misuse and vulnerability to injury.

Drinkers, Smokers Less Likely to Survive Cancer  (11/9/06)
Men diagnosed with cancer are less likely to survive the disease if they were smokers or heavy drinkers. Researchers at the National Cancer Center in South Korea studied over 14,000 men for nine years. They found that smokers were more likely to die from any kind of cancer than nonsmoking cancer patients. Among patients with head, neck, or liver cancer, heavy drinkers were more likely to die than nondrinkers, with risk increasing with rising consumption levels.

SMOKING NEWS

Kansas Smoking Statistics  (12/8/06)
The adult smoking prevalence rate in Kansas has dropped to 17.8% of the adult population, the sixth lowest rate in the nation! Currently more than 360,000 Kansas adults still smoke, 21% of Kansas teens use cigarettes, and there are about 3,900 tobacco-related deaths annually in Kansas according to the United Health Foundation.

Pregnant Women Warned Against Nicotine Replacement  (1/5/06)
Researchers in Spain have found that nicotine-replacement patches, gum, and inhalers may increase the risk of birth defects in early pregnancy. They speculated that the nicotine from patches and other anti-craving devices may be absorbed differently by the body, raising perinatal health risks. It is interesting to note that according to their study of 76,768 women, nicotine patch, gum, and inhaler users were more likely to have children with birth defects than women who smoked during pregnancy.
More Female Nonsmokers Dying of Lung Cancer (3/6/06)
The recent death of Dana Reeve has focused attention on a disturbing trend: young nonsmoking women dying of lung cancer. “The same amount of tobacco exposure is more likely to lead to the changes that cause lung cancer in a woman than the male counterpart who gets the same secondhand exposure,” said Indiana University School of Medicine oncologist Larry Einhorn.

Dangerous Pesticides Found in Cigarettes (4/20/06)
Dangerous levels of the pesticides flumetrallin, endocrine, pendimethalin, and trifluralin are in tobacco smoke, according to researchers at the Colorado School of Mines. These substances could negatively affect early development, reproduction, and hormonal processes. Two of these chemicals are classified as human carcinogens.

Root Canal More Common Among Smokers (2/27/06)
Smoking is not only bad for your health, it’s bad for your teeth. In an article published in the Journal of Dental Research, researchers said that male smokers require root-canal surgery at twice the rate of nonsmokers.

Smoking May Be Linked to Childhood Leukemia (7/5/06)
A study led by University of California researchers found that children of fathers who smoke may be at higher risk of developing childhood leukemia (AML-acute myeloid leukemia), even when fathers quit smoking prior to conception.

Smoking May Make Adolescents More Susceptible to Drinking (11/30/06)
Adolescent smokers have a 50-percent greater risk of developing an alcohol-use disorder that nonsmokers according to a study published in Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research. “The younger they start smoking, the more their brains appear to be more susceptible to other addictions,” said study co-author Richard Gruca of the Washington University School of Medicine.