

S.H.A.P.E. Newsletter

Sexual Health Awareness Peer Educators

From www.foxnews.com...

Failed AIDS Vaccine Experiment Shows Promise for Blacks, Asians

Monday, February 24, 2003

SAN FRANCISCO — An experimental AIDS vaccine being developed by VaxGen Inc. does not appear to protect most people from the disease, but does show promise in protecting blacks and Asians, the company said. The overall expected rate of infection was not reduced in the high-risk people who volunteered to take the vaccine, VaxGen said late Sunday. However, the expected infection rate for the 314 black volunteers who received the vaccine was reduced by 78 percent -- a finding the researchers said was unexpected. The rate was reduced by 67 percent for all nonwhite

volunteers other than Hispanics. "This is the first time we have specific numbers to suggest that a vaccine has prevented HIV infection in humans," VaxGen vice president Phillip Berman said in a prepared statement Sunday night. "We're not sure yet why certain groups have a better immune response." The Brisbane, Calif.-based company said it planned to continue developing the vaccine and will examine more closely why it worked better in blacks and Asians than it did in whites and Hispanics. The experiment, which initially involved 5,400 people at high-risk for the disease, had been criticized by some activists who say it could encourage risky behavior. Even if the vaccine proved effective on some level, there might be no way to tell if it has worked on a particular individual. But VaxGen has won widespread praise from doctors and the FDA

for its handling of an ethically difficult test. The company counseled patients in the experiments to practice safe sex because the vaccine may not work and because one-third of the volunteers received the placebo. The publicly traded company's stock has risen and fallen dramatically during the last year as rumors of the experiment's results swirled. It sold for as low as \$4.81 a share and as high as \$23.25. It closed at \$13.02 in trading on the Nasdaq Stock Market Friday. Experts believe a vaccine is the only way to stop the worldwide AIDS epidemic, which has already killed 20 million people and infected 40 million more. Merck & Co. is developing a different type of vaccine that has showed promise in early human testing, but researchers caution they are still years away from proving whether it works.

<http://www.foxnews.com/>

**April is
National STD
Awareness Month**

Check out these websites for more information:

smartersex.org
www.unaids.org
www.lifebeat.org
www.cdc.gov
www.hivtest.org
www.siecus.org

Sexual Health Facts

- There have been 26,518 cases of AIDS reported in the U.S. for people aged 20-24.
- Among recently sexually active college students, 83.4% had not consumed alcohol or used drugs at last sexual intercourse.
- The breakage rate of condoms is only 2 per every 100.
- Two young people in the U.S. will be infected with HIV every hour.

Facts taken from Bacchus Gamma's Spring 2003 Know Boundaries Manual

S.H.A.P.E. Updates...

Fundraising-We just got finished with a fundraising event held during Sexual Responsibility Week, February 10th-14th, where we sold "Condom Rose Bouquets". A portion of the money raised was donated to the Regional AIDS Project here in Manhattan. The majority of our fundraising money will go towards sending members to the Peer Education Conference sponsored by Bacchus Gamma in November in Washington, D.C.



Projects-S.H.A.P.E. sponsored a UPC "After Hours" themed Spring Break Getaway on March 7th. This was an alternative Friday night event from 9 p.m. until midnight which we were allocated a \$2,000 budget from UPC. Some of the activities included free dinner, the movie Road Trip, live music, free massages, gambling, twister, piñatas, "Pin the Jimmy on Timmy" and "Pin the Dam on Pam", a beer goggle/shopping cart obstacle course, and a drawing at the end of the night for prizes in-

cluding a DVD player. This was a big project for us that we spent a lot of time working on, and it turned out to be a huge success

American Red Cross Club-

Quite a few SHAPE members have been actively participating in the American Red Cross Club and the Act Smart program which is also linked with the Boys and Girls Club. May 4th is their Spring Benefit concert where there will be four bands and lots of prevention education and specialists supporting HIV/AIDS awareness.