Course to teach cancer detection

By Lori Murphy
Lantern staff writer

Spending two hours in a course every other Monday during spring quarter may save your life, an OSU physician said.

The course, "How to Avoid Dying from Cancer: Now and Later," will teach students how to prevent and detect cancer, said Dr. John P. Minton, professor of clinical oncology and the course instructor.

"Almost all cancers can be cured if discovered early and treated properly. This program helps people avoid cancer and if they do get it, it (the program) will help (people) to recognize and get rid of it," Minton said.

Moon Chen, assistant professor in the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, said, "Cancer is the second leading cause of death in this country."

One out of every four of all Americans will get cancer and one out of every 11 women will get breast cancer.

Students will learn how to determine their chances of getting cancer by examining their family record.

Minton said, "You have to know who you are and perceive your personal risk. Check how many times cancer occurred in your family; the more people involved the higher the risk."

Not all students who have had cancer in their families will get cancer, he said. One way to prevent the disease is to avoid cancer-producing chemicals.

"In one cigarette or marijuana joint there are at least 22 known cancer-producing chemicals and 50 cancer promoters," Minton said.

Promoters, such as caffeine, block a cell's ability to repair itself and fight cancer-producing chemicals. Cancer cells can then attach to fat cells in the body where they divide and spread.

The class also will teach students how to detect cancer while it's still in an early, more curable stage, Minton said.

Cancer cells may live in the body for 10 years and usually go through 30 generations of cells before being detected. At 40 generations, the cancer can kill the patient, he said.

If the cancer is discovered before it reaches the 15th generation, it usually can be cured.

The one credit-hour course is listed as Health: Education 101 and meets from 4-6 p.m. Mondays. For more information about the course call the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at 422-7076.
Cancer prevention class draws community honor

By Debra Pedersen
Lantern staff writer

The 1985 Ohio Community Health Promotion Award will be presented to Charles Mand, director and professor of the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation on May 19.

This award is presented each year to organizations noted for excellence in community health promotion programs by The Ohio Department of Health.

The school is the first and only academic unit to receive this honor.

It is receiving the award because of its behavioral contract program in a health education course.

Health Education 150 is a two-hour class which identifies and explains different cancers.

According to the coordinator of the course, Moon Chen, 300 students enroll each year to learn about cancer and its warning signs.

Students hear guest lecturers in addition to their regular instructor. They also have the chance to practice what they learn.

After the students possess a basic understanding of the subject, they draw up a behavioral contract for five weeks which will help them monitor their lifestyles to help prevent cancer.

There are three phases to this written contract.

The first phase identifies a specific cancer, based on the student's family history and personal lifestyle, which a particular student is at the highest risk of developing.

The second phase identifies three behaviors a student can change to reduce the risk of the cancer they are studying.

The third phase entails making out specific plans explaining what resources will be used to change behaviors and keeping a daily record of how well students achieve behavioral changes.

Once a week, students submit a progress report concerning the three behavioral changes. Finally, the student submits a two-page paper about his reaction to the program and whether he succeeded or failed and what helped or prevented him from doing so.

Tracy Hughes, a freshman from Tiffin, is taking the course.

"It's so important for people to be educated about cancer, because if you know the signs and symptoms to look for, you can spot problems earlier and possibly prevent death," Hughes said. She identified colon cancer as the one cancer which she is at a high risk of developing.

To change her habits, she added one source of fiber and one uncooked fruit or vegetable to her daily diet, and she cut down on red meat consumption. "People don't realize that small forms of prevention can be quite easy and worth the trouble."
OSU cancer course

By Lucy Clifftorne
Lantern staff writer

Thanks to a grant from the American Cancer Society, five Ohio universities plan to offer a cancer awareness course this year based on an Ohio State model.

Since 1980, Ohio State has offered Health Education 150, "How to Avoid Dying from Cancer. Now and Later. With the help of a $7,855 grant, Ohio State produced a workshop last year to help other universities develop a similar course.

Case Western Reserve University, Youngstown State University, the University of Toledo, Ohio University, and the University of Cincinnati plan to offer the new class next spring and summer.

John P. Minton, doctor of clinical oncology (the study of tumors), who teaches the class at Ohio State, said he strongly believes in prevention.

"I have always hoped that every student, faculty and staff member would attend this course at some time," Minton said. "It would take a lot of ignorance away from their lives and give them a defense mechanism against dying of cancer."

The course includes lectures on several kinds of cancer, risk factors and AIDS. It is open to members of the community for $100, and is free to anyone over 60 years of age.

"Dr. Minton is one of 16 American Cancer Society professors in the country," said Moon S. Chen, associate professor of Health Education and coordinator of the cancer awareness class. "He's a rare bird."

Minton said he believes the unprecedented rise in the last five years of adult cancers in young people is marijuana-related.

"We connect with at-risk students at a time when, if they pay attention, they can really make a difference," Minton said. "If you discovered a cancer yesterday, you got that cancer ten years ago, not yesterday."

Students learn about early detection of cancers, including how to search for breast and testicular cancer lumps, during a mini-health fair. "We teach students that if they find something, they should take it to a doctor immediately. If the doctor doesn't find anything, get a second opinion," Minton said.

The annual course has won one national and two state awards for community health promotion. For more information contact Renee Burkley at 292-6116.

model for 5 Ohio universities