

Hospitals: What You Don't Know Can Kill You



SARA LYON
Managing Editor

People go to hospitals to get better, but a newspaper investigation found that there are hundreds of thousands of deaths linked to infections that patients received in our own nation's hospitals.

Fatalities by infections contracted by unsanitary hospitals represent the fourth leading cause of death in the United States. These infections each year kill more people than car accidents, fires, and drowning combined.

It frightened me that there is a possibility that a simple surgery could end in a fatality, which could have been pre-

vented. Why are hospitals not meeting their sanitary standards and requirements?

It was reported recently that 75 percent of all hospitals have been cited for sanitary violations, according to the CBS website. Government data show that about two million people admitted to hospitals per year will pick up some sort of infection. Such infections might not be harmful to an average person, but sick people who are susceptible and unable to fight back can't handle them.

It all comes down to one problem: doctors, nurses, and other hospital employees aren't taking the time to disinfect themselves and their environment. A *Tribune* report found that tens of thousands of lives could have been saved if doctors or nurses simply washed their hands.

To me, this is absolutely disgusting. From patient to patient, and with limited time, doctors don't take the time to do a simple procedure that

protects themselves and their patients. Studies show that only 50 percent of doctors make time to wash their hands. This is unacceptable.

In other cases, doctors and nurses wear their scrubs to work, then walk right into the operating room. Plus, some doctors don't wash their hands before surgery because they are wearing gloves, forgetting that they are using dirty hands to put them on.

Not too long ago, I witnessed the aftermath of a car accident. While I was pulled over waiting for the ambulance to pass, I watched the paramedic put his medical gloves on while he was driving. He then put his hands back on the dirty steering wheel. This is unsanitary.

Why should a person have to worry about dying from something that they didn't even go to the hospital for? Case after case has been reported of deaths in hospitals not even linked to the original illness.

This is definitely an issue that needs to be addressed more and a problem that needs to be taken care of.

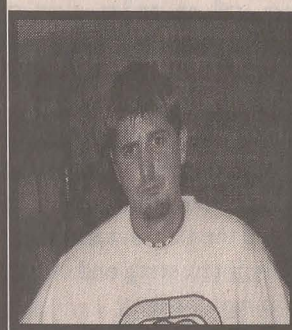
Here are a few tips to ensure a clean and sanitary environment if you need to go to the doctor or the hospital.

Watch your doctor and make sure that they wash their hands before they make contact with you. Also watch to see if they wash after they write in your chart. This is a good sign of how you will be treated in the hospital if they are to perform surgery on you.

Go to the hospital and look around. Make sure that there isn't any garbage on the floor, and if the bathrooms are dirty, it's a good indication that cleanliness is not a priority.

This may make you uncomfortable, but asking the nurses or doctor to wash their hands is a good idea. This could help you stay healthy, or even save your life.

White Powder, Green Dollars



MATT PETROVICH
P.O.V. Editor

For as long as they have been around, collegiate sports have been riddled with controversy. The most recent victims of this growing trend in Michigan are Michigan State University and the University of Michigan.

Earlier this year, MSU star quarterback Jeff Smoker was admitted into rehab to deal with a growing substance abuse problem. Smoker has confessed to the use of cocaine over the past few years and took responsibility for his problem this year. Smoker hopes to return the following year and be reinstated into the football program.

The question remains- is Jeff Smoker the norm for college athletes? The pressure of school life is enough to crush many student's will power. Add to that the class schedule and a grueling regiment of exercise and training and you end up with one stressed-out time bomb. Still, Despite all the hardships and stress that college athletes face, Smoker's situation does not appear to be that common. A much more common problem with college athletes involves that most elusive of all elements for a college student-money.

People remember the University of Michigan Wolverine's Fab 5 with mixed emotions. Chris Webber, Juwan Howard, Jalen Rose, Jimmy King, and Ray Jackson were the rebels of NCAA basketball. All five started as freshman and led the Wolverines to the National Championship against Duke. They lost, but captured the hearts of millions.

Chris Webber used to joke about not being able to afford his own jersey at the U of M bookstore. As it appears now, he could have not only bought the

jersey, but the store as well. The trash-talking Fab 5 have been brought under scrutiny this year for allegedly taking money from Ed Martin.

While investigating Martin for money laundering, investigators came upon some evidence that suggests the Fab 5 was given a substantial amount of money by Martin. How this money may have affected the performance of the players is also being questioned. In reaction to these allegations, the University took down the banners and other awards for excellence they had achieved during the years in question.

One could argue, as Chris Webber once did, and say that these are college students who need financial support. The disagreement, of course, is that these college students are there for an education, which they receive free of charge, for being outstanding athletes.

NCAA rules clearly state a player is to accept no form of payment for his actions. The rules are there for a reason. When a man like Ed Martin buys a player a car, he doesn't do so out of the goodness of his heart.

It is unclear whether or not Martin asked players to shave points or alter their own game in some way to benefit the point spread, but it has happened in the past. Martin and those like him attempt to buy the loyalty of these athletes. Money is a very seductive lure for everyone (young college students perhaps more than others).

Though it might seem unfair to the student-athlete, college players must be held accountable for their actions just as the rest of the world is. Drugs are illegal and violating that law always carries with it severe punishments. Whether Smoker is allowed back into the football program at MSU or not should depend upon his ability to kick the habit and function as a law-abiding citizen. The NCAA needs to stand by its rules, as well. College players are paid with an education; taking anything else offered is just plain criminal.

Letter to the Editor: Deal With it; Grow Up

PLAINTIFF:
H. APRIL WATSON

Who lied to you and told you that life was fair???

You are absolutely correct when you say that staff should not park in undesignated areas. Staff should adhere to the guidelines set forth and act as role models. Therefore there is no excuse for anyone to park where they should not. On the other hand we do not live in a perfect world where

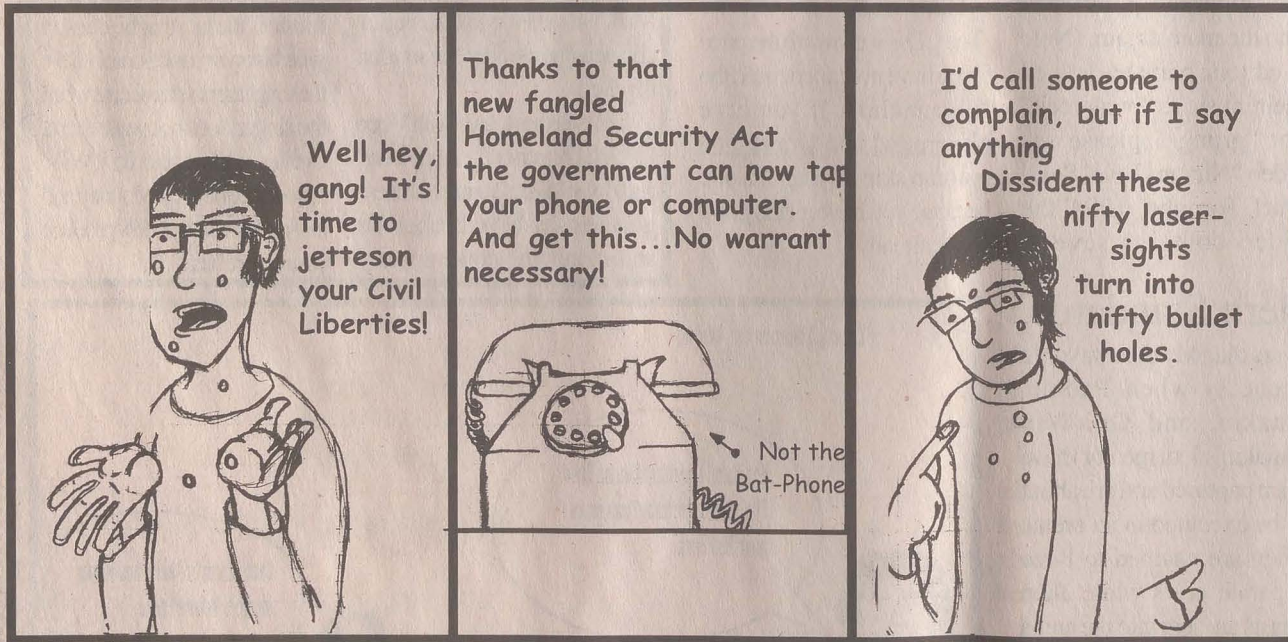
people always do exactly as they should.

There are more and more students each semester here at the college so maybe you won't get that choice parking spot- deal with it and grow up. This is a college newspaper and all that two of you could think of to write about was life not being fair in the parking lot?? Here is a thought for you, arrive for class early, and then maybe you will get the parking spot you want.

DEFENDANT:
LUMBERJACK

In defense of the articles that appeared in the last issue, the staff at the Lumberjack thinks parking is a worthy issue for debate. The fact that we had two articles dealing with the same issue did not escape our attention. We felt that if the students believed it was a large enough problem to be addressed in two sections, so be it. One article was, as you

know, a Point of View column while the other was straight news. If it weren't an issue with people, we wouldn't have discussed it in such detail. At no point in the articles did the respective authors whine; they simply stated frustrations with the system as it presently stands. Their frustrations echo those of other students as well. It was obviously a problem worthy of discussion. If it concerns our readers and our staff, it is news worthy.



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