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AUG. 14, 2012 | 110-12

Laurier informs 2002-11 Kinesiology students of possible health risk

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University has become aware of a possible health risk to some participants in a third-year Kinesiology and Physical Education course (Physiology of Physical Activity KP322) as a result of blood lactate level testing. There is an extremely low risk that the way in which the blood sampler device was used in the testing could have resulted in blood transmission among those course participants who volunteered to have their blood lactate levels tested.

Laurier's Health Services Department, in consultation with Region of Waterloo Public Health, indicate that the risk of transmission of blood-borne viruses such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV is extremely low in this scenario.

The risks of transmission of Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV are estimated to be as follows:

For Hepatitis B:

- 6 in 1,000,000 (six in one million) among those vaccinated for Hepatitis B¹

For Hepatitis C:

- 1 in 1,000,000 (one in one million)

For HIV:

- 1 in 10,000,000 (one in ten million)

"The university recognizes that despite the extremely low risk, this situation is concerning to those involved," said Deborah MacLatchy, vice-president: academic and provost. "We are taking the situation very seriously and have chosen to take proactive measures to provide information to those involved."

The university will notify, by mail and/or email, individuals who may have had their blood lactate levels tested as part of the course between September 2002 and December 2011. The university will assist those who choose to be tested for these blood-borne viruses.

This particular blood sampler is no longer being used in the KP322 lab. The university is reviewing the circumstances that led to this situation and the university's policies and guidelines associated with such testing.

Students who took Physiology of Physical Activity KP322 between September 2002 and December 2011 are encouraged to read detailed information provided in an FAQ document on the www.wlu.ca/KP322info website and email questions@wlu.ca with additional questions.

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¹ *The risk is 10-fold greater for those who are unimmunized. Ontario began a school-based immunization program for Grade 7 students in 1994.*