HEALTHY COMETS
SAFE SPRING BREAK!
**SPRING BREAK SAFETY TIPS**

**IN HOTELS:**
- Reserve a room that is above the 1st floor but below the 6th floor. Why? First floor rooms are easier to break into and rooms above the 6th floor are sometimes hard for fire ladders to reach. Don’t take valuables with you on spring break if possible - if not ask the hotel you are staying in if they have a safe. Never leave money in your room. Always keep it securely on your person. If your room has a balcony, NEVER use it as a diving board into the swimming pool. Your best bet is to pretend like it’s not even there. NEVER allow guests onto your balcony.

**AT THE ATM:**
- Always visit the ATM with a group – but don’t allow the buddy system to let you become complacent about safety. Go during daylight hours. When you approach the machine do a 360° scan and walk away if someone nearby makes you uncomfortable. Cover the key pad when you punch in your pin number.

**ON THE BEACH:**
- Beware of sun exposure – sand and water act as a reflector for the sun, which can double your exposure. Always wear a SPF sunblock of 30 or higher. Avoid drinking alcohol and caffeinated beverages in the sun. Make sure to drink plenty of water to replace the fluids you lose.

**WHILE SWIMMING:**
- Only swim in designated areas and always make sure a life guard is on duty no matter where you swim. Accidents happen to the most experienced swimmers. Never dive into water you are unsure of (depth and content). ALWAYS swim with a buddy. If you are in a boat make sure to wear a life jacket!

**GOING OUT:**
- Always go out in a group and go home with the same group. If you watch the news at all, you know that leaving with a stranger/strangers is a horrible idea. Spring break is a breading ground for drink drugging. NEVER leave a drink unattended or accept a drink from anyone other than a bartender or waitress. Remember designate a sober driver AND decision maker

**“HOOKIN’ UP:**
- Everyone is NOT doing it. It’s all a bunch of TV hype. IF you do chose to have sex make SURE it is protected (with a condom). Decide before spring break what you are willing to do sexually and stick to it. If you start to connect with someone, make sure they know up front if sex isn’t an option. Don’t let yourself be talked into changing your preset boundaries.

**WHAT HAPPENS ON SPRING BREAK NEVER STAYS ON SPRING BREAK:**
- Be prepared for EVERYTHING you do to end up on the internet. Pictures from years and years ago can easily resurface now. Don’t ever do anything you wouldn’t want your parents, boy/girl friend, future husband/wife/employer to see accidentally while browsing, or worse yet intentionally by an enemy/angry ex/co-worker trying to get ahead/etc.

**WHILE DRINKING:**
- According to a University of Wisconsin study, 75% of college males and 43% of college females reported being intoxicated on a daily basis on spring break. If you decide to drink, know the liquor laws of the state you are in, only go to safe well populated areas, never leave anywhere with strangers and designate a sober driver and decision maker before you go out. READ THE INFORMATION ON SPRING BREAK AND ALCOHOL AND ALCOHOL POISONING…THIS IS A MUST READ AND THERE IS NOT ENOUGH SPACE HERE TO PROVIDE YOU WITH THIS ESSENTIAL
You’ve fought hard for a semester and a half – now it’s time to leave it all behind. Nothing like drinking a cold one while you’re laying out in the sun, catching some rays. But suddenly you start to feel a little dizzy, sort of weak, you feel a little confused, now your muscles start to spasm. Your urine looks a little more like maple syrup than watered down lemonade. Welcome to dehydration my friend. Alcohol can speed the dehydration process to deadly levels rapidly. The more alcohol you consume, the less likely you are to identify the symptoms. You have just earned yourself a free pass to the ER. Hopefully you get there in time.

This is a very serious consequence of consuming alcohol in the summer sun. It is a must to drink non-alcoholic and non-caffeinated beverages to replace body fluid that you are losing in the sun. Don’t ruin your vacation!

Hangovers - AKA headaches, vomiting or nausea, “cotton mouth”, fatigue. Not a fun way to spend a well deserved vacation. But this is exactly what you will be doing if you drink too much, too much too fast, or any on an empty stomach. Two things can happen – one your body can go through withdrawals - which is a rebound effect of alcohol on the nervous system. Two, you can also push your liver to the point that it can take no more and begins to slow the rest of your bodily functions down just so it can keep up. Either way – you are punishing your body to the point it begins to retaliate.

To avoid a hangover – don’t drink so much (an easy one). Sipping your drinks rather than gulping or downing (this will save you money also!); have food in your stomach before you begin drinking – continue to nibble as long as you are drinking; pace your drinks – one drink per hour if you are a guy – 1 ½ hours if you are a girl (this will give your body a chance to clear each drink); make sure your drinks are standard in size (12 oz. beer, 5 oz. wine, 1.5 oz of 80 proof liquor); never mix alcohol with prescription or illicit drugs (especially depressant drugs like GHB); alternate a non-alcoholic beverage between alcoholic drinks; NEVER feel pressure or pressure others to drink more or faster. Drinking games and contests are stupid and can be a one way ticket to hangoverville, the hospital or worse!

Then there’s alcohol and sex!

Alcohol and sex go together about as well as orange juice and tooth paste. A small amount of alcohol can act as a social lubricant – but any more than a very small amount can bring about drastic changes in the physiology of the sexual response!

- Men may have less intense orgasms, difficulty in obtaining and maintaining an erection, erectile impotence, ejaculatory impotence and painful ejaculation
- Women can experience less intense orgasms, fewer or no orgasms, lack of energy and loss of lubrication which can result in painful intercourse

More often than not, too much alcohol can contribute to miscommunication and misreading intent – which may result in unwanted sex or rape.

NEVER EVER TAKE YOUR EYES OFF YOUR DRINK AND ONLY ACCEPT DRINKS THAT YOU SEE THE BARTENDER MAKE.
Is it really for me?

There are lots of reasons people get tattoos – they want to be trendy, they want to impress friends/boyfriend/girlfriend, they want to be sexy, they want to look tough – or maybe there is a deeper more personal meaning. The bottom line is body art – more specifically a tattoo is something that, even when removed by laser, will be with you for the rest of your life. Before you make this kind of commitment, spend more than just a few minutes thinking about how you will feel about it a year, five years even fifty years down the road. Hummmmm…….

Let me make a suggestion….try something temporary for a while. Is it a tattoo you’re after?? Try a temp, or henna. Henna tattoos are painless and most important will disappear in 1-4 weeks. This is a great way to try out a tattoo without making a life time commitment. So it’s a piercing you want? Clip on rings are made for just about every part of the body. You get the look sans the pain, after care and scaring (if you decide to let it grow back).

So let’s say you’ve done the responsible thing. You’ve tried temporary, you’ve fallen in love and you are 100% sure this body art is for you. What now? Well the next step is to pick the place to have it done. Trust me when I tell you that a friend with a needle and a cube of ice is not the way to go. If you are adamant about avoiding Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV&AIDS plus countless other viruses, germs and bacteria that can cause infections….I suggest you take this next section very seriously.
A LESSON IN BODY ART...

...PART DEUX

• First and foremost make sure you choose a LICENCED facility in the United States. They should be licensed through the Texas Department of State Health Services.
• The facility should be neat and clean in appearance and smell.
• All needles and tattoo inks should be BRAND NEW and STERILE. A reputable artist will open sterilize needles and inks in front of you.
• Prior to getting your body art, talk to others who have used that artist about why they choose the person they did weather they still like their body art and problems they may have had that could be discussed with the artist

A few suggestions:

• Ask about the qualifications of the artist
• Don’t alter your mental state (alcohol or drugs) before going to get your tattoo. You may be more willing to take unwanted chances and you may not be fully aware of unhealthy or inappropriate conditions. A reputable facility will not allow you to receive body art under the influence as mandated by Texas law.
• Take a friend with you for support. Very few types of body art are pain free to receive.

So it’s a done deal. You’re there, it’s about to happen what now?

• It can’t be emphasized enough….Make SURE the needles and tattoo ink are brand new and sterile.
• The area receiving the art should be thoroughly disinfected and cleaned.
• Make sure the artist reviews all possible risks and complications before any work is done
• Ask any questions you have. If the artist or person you are talking to is hesitant or unwilling to answer then GET OUT. There is a good chance the artist or facility is not in compliance with important safety standards

Ahhhhhhh. It’s finally done. Now you have to take care of it!

• Your artist is required by law to provide you with aftercare instructions.
• The area should stay clean and dry until completely healed.
• Apply a topical antibiotic and/or antibacterial cleanser to the site as directed.
• Monitor the site for any sign of infection or problems.

Last but not least.....

• Cover tattoos with sunscreen to avoid fading of the ink.
• Make sure you choose appropriate size jewelry for the particular piercing you have – jewelry that is too heavy can cause stretching or tearing of the pierced area.
• Jewelry for new piercings should be surgical steel or other implant quality material.
Spring Break and The 'S' Word

Sex - for those of you who aren’t too shy to say it

And if you’re too shy to say it you shouldn’t be having it!
And for that matter if you are embarrassed to say the word condom
let alone carry one than you definitely don’t need to be having sex.

Here’s a riddle: “What would you rather have…..a condom in
your purse/wallet or an STD?” NO brainer right?

Make sure you carry them. Make sure you know how to properly use them
and use water based lubricant. Not only will lubrication help protect against
a broken condom…it can also enhance the whole sexual experience.

Oral sex needs to be safe too. Did you know that HIV, Herpes, HPV, Gonorrhea,
Chlamydia, Syphilis and Hepatitis B can all be transmitted through oral sex?
Potential outcomes of contracting an STD orally can range from a very sore
throat to throat cancer. Condoms or dental dams are the two safest barriers
to use during oral sex. Using protection during oral sex challenges our
conventional thoughts, however it is a very important component of safe
sexual practices.

Remember that:
NO means NO.
MAYBE means NO.
NO ANSWER means NO.
The only thing that doesn’t mean no is Y-E-S.

Make sure alcohol isn’t telling you to have sex. A clear, substance free
decision is the only right one! No one wants to do the walk of shame…
even though it may be a spring break trend. It’s not cool!

Watch out for each other.
Use the buddy system.
Designate a sober driver and someone
to help you make logical, thought out decisions!