

# Health officials say home pregnancy test not accurate

By Kim Wilt

A new home pregnancy test which entered the market this spring is being sold in Lincoln pharmacies, but some Lincoln health officials question its effectiveness.

The Early Pregnancy Test, or E.P.T., is sold in a kit, and costs between \$10.95 and \$13.68, depending on the pharmacy where it's sold.

Brady Brostrom, a pharmacist with the Baker's Physicians' Building, said the test detects the presence of a hormone which is present in higher levels in a pregnant woman's urine. If the test is positive, indicating pregnancy, the mixture will change color, he said. He estimated that the test is 99 percent accurate.

He said that if a woman is at least one or two months pregnant, the tests will be accurate.

Bakers' Physician Building sells the kits for \$10.95.

The E.P.T. also is sold at Family Drug, and Winter Drug, at a cost of \$10.95 and \$13.68 respectively.

Pharmacists at all three outlets said they believed the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had approved the sale of the kits. The pharmacist at Winter Drug said that if the FDA had not approved the kit,

"it wouldn't be on the market."

### Health Center policy

The University Health Center does not use the E.P.T. kits, but it does do pregnancy testing, at a cost of \$6.50, according to Linda Mick, a medical technologist with the center.

The E.P.T. is not as accurate or as sensitive as the one done at the Health Center, she said. "It's not a controlled reaction. The person is doing it on herself, so there's some emotional stress involved."

She said in most cases, pregnancy can be detected within one to two weeks after the first missed period. But if a woman wants a test earlier, "we never say we won't test"

The test takes about fifteen minutes, she said, and is usually to a physician within half an hour.

"Any negative result we get is confirmed by back-up testing," Mick said.

With the E.P.T., she said, it is possible to get a negative result at night, and a positive result in the morning because the E.P.T. is not regulated for urine concentration by specific gravity. She said in the morning, urine is more concentrated than in the evening when it has been diluted by fluids drunk during the day.

### Planned Parenthood tests

Planned Parenthood also tests for pregnancy at its clinic. They do not use the E.P.T. method either. However, Christy Solomon, a Planned Parenthood counselor, said, "I think it's a real accurate test, if it's done correctly."

A problem, she said, is that "women run these tests and then don't trust the results, so they come in to us."

She said the tests run at Planned Parenthood cost \$5, and take about 5 to 10 minutes. The test is accurate within 12 to 14 days after woman's last period, she said.

Counseling is required after the test is done and the results are in, she said.

"We talk to them about what they're going to do. It varies with the individual".

Birthright is a counseling service for pregnant women, but provides free pregnancy tests which are done at St. Elizabeth's hospital, according to Mary Alice Pratt, the director.

She said the results are available within 20 to 30 minutes. The test is accurate after 46 days from the first day of a woman's last period, she said.

"If the test is negative, we'll do it over," she said.

Although she said she was not familiar with the E.P.T. tests, she said. It sounded similar to the one Birthright uses.

She said that although Birthright is a pro-life group, and does not counsel for an abortion, "We can't make a decision for (a pregnant woman). We would refuse no one."

## Sunday holiday won't be dry

New Year's Eve falls on Sunday this year, a fact which could have driven many Lincolniters out of town to celebrate since Lincoln is dry on most Sundays.

But Monday the City Council passed a resolution that will allow sales and consumption of alcohol on the premises of an

establishment this New Year's Eve.

The resolution was introduced by Mayor Helen Boosalis, who said she has received a number of calls on the subject.

Councilman Bob Jeanbe was the only dissenter. Councilmen Joe Hampton and Bob Sikyta were absent from Monday's meeting.

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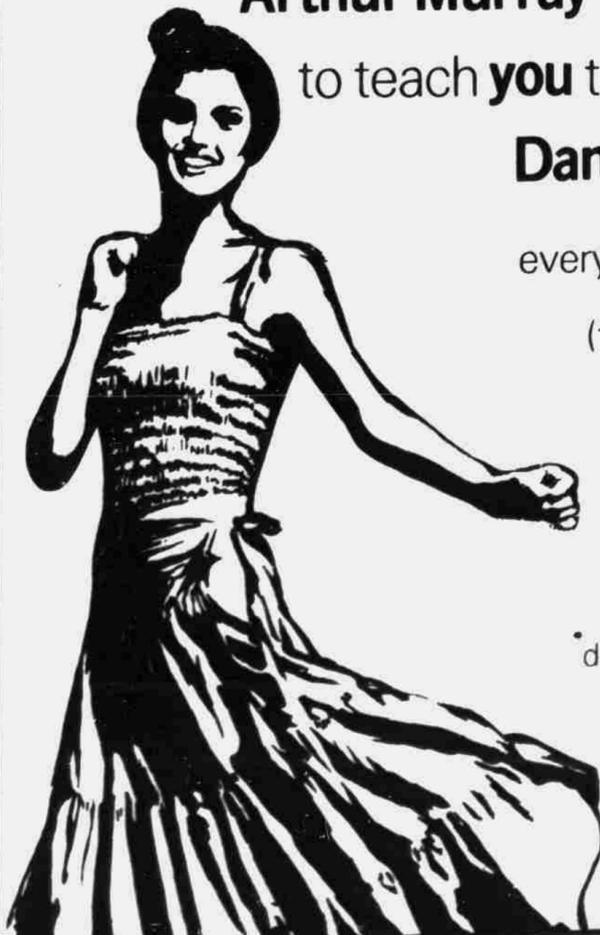
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