



Staff photo by KRAIG SCATTARELLA
SUPERDOC — Dr. Alan Blum, 31, one of three founders of DOC, an organization of physicians devoted to fighting their patients' major "killing" habits with Madison Avenue tactics, displays Superhealth 2000 shirt.

In health project *Verbal aim taken at ills*

By ANN SULLIVAN
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It's not a bird. It's not a plane. It's Superhealth 2000.

As the name suggests, it has to do with health and is the project of physicians who are using sophisticated Madison Avenue tactics to attack cigarette smoking, alcohol dependence and other drug abuse, and poor nutrition.

Dr. Alan Blum, president of DOC, an acronym for Doctors Ought to Care, brought his good-humored approach to a symposium of family physicians last week at the Hilton Hotel.

Blum, who formerly practiced in Florida, is presently the Morris Fishbein fellow in medical journalism at the American Medical Association in Chicago.

In an article in the Feb. 22-29 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association, Blum chastises his fellow physicians, particularly for their lackadaisical attitude about smoking.

"It's time medical science made it easier for itself by catching up to advertising science in communication skills," he wrote.

DOC, which now has some 1,000 physician members, has been gearing up particularly to offset cigarette advertising with a similar approach.

"One we have," he said in a Portland interview, "is a girl walking toward the camera. 'Sure, I used to smoke. Doesn't every kid?' says the girl. 'But then my boyfriend told me I had zoo breath, and that was enough for me.'"

Others: "You've coughed up long enough, baby" and "I smoke for smell."

DOC has also sponsored an Emphysema Slims tennis tournament and is planning a Benson and Heart Attack Film Festival.

The approaches were suggested by junior high school students the physicians are working with. They



OFFBEAT — Advertising attacks on cigarette advertising include fighting smoke with smoke in satirical poster, "You've coughed up long enough, baby. Emphysema Slims."

now have chapters in 19 states. President of the Oregon chapter is Dr. Burk Gossom, a resident at Emanuel Hospital.

"What we're trying to do," said Blum, "is look at the killer habits from a totally different point of view. We're going to engage them (children) in an understanding that cigarettes, alcohol and good foods are a looks, sex and money issue."

He pointed out the ads that give the appearance of beautiful people living in luxury and said the sexy, rich look recruits thousands of children.

"A 10-year supply of cigarettes costs \$7,000. A consumer of cigarettes in the course of the usual 30 years before he starts suffering his debilitating disease, will hand over \$25,000 to the tobacco industry.

"Most people," he said, "are not aware of the fact that the cigarette industry not only is as powerful as the oil industry, it has as high a profit margin, if not higher.

"Yet at the same time, doctors are being criticized for the high cost of medical care. And here we turn around and see an industry spending \$800 million a year to promote the high cost of medical care. Cigarettes are related to the deaths of 350,000 persons a year."

Blum said DOC is feuding with such organizations as the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association in an effort to make them give more attention to prevention, changing people's attitudes, and not so much on research for cure.

He said the public has an image of physicians as half producing wonder drugs and miracle cures and the other half coming down with malpractice suits.

"Somewhere in between is the kind of old-fashioned-doctor approach where the physician gets to know his families, has time for them and expects a bit from the patients too. We know the major preventable causes of bad health and high medical costs.

"We're fighting smoke with smoke."