



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

ELIZABETH HERTEL
DIRECTOR

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CONTACT: Chelsea Wuth
517-241-2112
WuthC@michigan.gov

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) Awareness Week April 11-17

LANSING, Mich. – As part of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) Awareness Week, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is raising awareness about prevention strategies and the benefits of STI testing, early diagnosis, and treatment.

Since 2010, in Michigan:

- Gonorrhea has increased an average of 4% per year.
- Primary and secondary syphilis have increased an average of 10% per year.
- Chlamydia is the most reported infection with 50,374 cases in 2019. The average increase per year is approximately 1%.

Each of these infections are 100 percent treatable and will cause no harm if caught and treated early. Left untreated, these infections can lead to serious complications for both men and women. MDHHS recommends that everyone who is sexually active be screened for STIs on regular basis and especially after having sex with a new partner.

Recently, there has been an increase in the number of female syphilis cases. Women who have untreated syphilis and become pregnant risk transmitting the virus to their baby during pregnancy. When the baby contracts syphilis during pregnancy, it is called congenital syphilis (CS). Congenital syphilis can lead to serious complications and even death. Over the last year, cases of congenital syphilis have increased at an alarming rate. Proper prenatal care, testing for syphilis, and treatment for syphilis early in pregnancy can prevent congenital syphilis.

To combat the increase in STIs, MDHHS works closely with local health departments, healthcare providers, pharmacists, and community-based organizations to raise awareness about STIs and promote STI testing and treatment.

“We can slow down the spread of STIs. All STIs are treatable. Regular STI testing and treatment are critical and help to avoid serious complications, including infertility” said Dr. Joneigh S. Khaldun, MDHHS Chief Medical Executive and Chief Deputy Director for Health. “Through education and open conversations, we can see a significant slow in the spread of STIs. We encourage people to get tested regularly, use protection such as condoms, and talk with your partner(s) about being safe.”

In Michigan, clinicians have the option to use a treatment method called Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) in select cases of gonorrhea, chlamydia, and trichomoniasis. EPT helps individuals avoid reinfection by allowing the provider the option to prescribe antibiotics for sex partners of infected patients without examining them. Presumptively treating sex partners helps to reduce the overall spread of STIs but is especially effective in preventing sex partners from reinfecting each other.

Understanding risk, getting regularly tested, talking about testing with partners, consistently and correctly using condoms, reducing the number of partners, getting prompt treatment for STIs, and abstaining from sex are all effective prevention strategies. Safe, effective vaccines are also available to prevent hepatitis B and some types of the human papillomavirus that cause genital warts and can cause cancer.

More information and resources about STI's are available on the [CDC website](#). Data, resources, and technical assistance for Michigan's STI program is available at Michigan.gov/HIVSTI.

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