

Family Planning Education (FP Ed) is an educational newsletter from the Health Advocates at Finger Lakes Community Health. This newsletter covers all reproductive health topics, in addition to related services offered at our health centers.

NOVEMBER is... Men's Healthy Sexuality Month

According to ABC news, men are less likely to see a medical provider for care than women. Men tend to put off going to the doctor to have check-ups and reproductive health discussions. The majority of the time men seek an appointment with a health provider only if they are experiencing symptoms. Men are also more likely to have symptoms for a prolonged period of time before they will actually get the problem checked out.

Often people who have an STI do not show any signs or symptoms until the infection has been prevalent for some time. Disclaimer: Those pictures that we all saw in school are not what you wake up looking like the day after you've contracted an STI.

Common symptoms of an STI are:

- Pain when urinating
- Penile discharge (usually yellow or green in color)
- Swollen testicles
- Loss of appetite
- Redness in infected areas
- Low grade fever
- Itching

Regardless of your sexual preference (men who have sex with men [MSM] or men who have sex with women [MSW]), you can contract an STI if you are not taking safety measures. The most effective ways to protect yourself are to wear condoms for sexual penetration or to use dental dams for oral sex. These are proven methods to decrease the likelihood of contracting an STI when exposed. Second to regular and correct condom use, regular STI testing is important to know your status.

At FLCH, we recommend testing with every new partner or, at a minimum, once a year. These guidelines are even for people who are in committed relationships. STI testing today requires a urine test or blood draw depending on what you are testing for. There are also tests that use a swab (like OraQuick for HIV) to test some skin cells. These tests are painless; it's just like using a q-tip to clean your ears.



Provider Spotlight!

Terry Yonker, RN, MS, FNP-BC
Finger Lakes Community Health



What you need to know...

“Hepatitis C is an infectious disease affecting the liver and is caused by the Hepatitis C virus. Discovered in 1989, it is one of five viruses (A, B, C, D, E) that can affect the liver. All have different forms of transmission and treatment methods. Hepatitis C is primarily contagious through contact with the blood of an infected person, most often via sharing needles. In rare instances, it can be transmitted during sex and also to babies from infected mothers during birth.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, 2.7 million Americans have Hepatitis C, and the numbers are on the rise. Hepatitis C affects all walks of life. The virus causes inflammation in the liver leading to cirrhosis, liver failure, or cancer. It is the second leading reason for liver transplantation in the USA. There are few symptoms during the early phase of the illness. Sometimes one's immune system can clear the virus; however, in 70-85% of cases, the virus remains in the body leading to chronic infection and serious health problems. The good news is that cur-

rent treatment can be very effective and can lead to a cure.

Screening is not necessary for everyone. Current recommendations suggest screening baby boomers (people born in the years 1945-1965), those who have current or past history of IV drug use or sharing needles, blood transfusion recipients who received blood products before 1987, health workers who sustain needle stick injury, children of Hepatitis C infected mothers, and anyone who has abnormal liver function tests. The screening is a simple blood test. ”

Prevention is key! The following precautionary measures can limit blood to blood exposure to the Hepatitis C virus:

- **Do not share needles.**
- **Use syringe exchange programs at local pharmacies**
- **Do not share personal items like razors or toothbrushes**
- **Use a latex condom during sex**
- **Only receive tattoo and body piercings from a reputable commercial provider**
- **Practice good infection control: wear gloves if there is potential to come in contact with another person's blood and immediately wash hands thoroughly if an accidental exposure occurs.**
- **Clean blood spills with 1 part bleach in 10 parts water while wearing gloves**
- **Request a screening test from a health care provider if there has been exposure**

Where will the FLCH Health Advocates be this month?

November 4th: Hannick Hall, Newark

November 6th, 12th and 17th: BOCES Health Classes, Flint

November 7th: Finger Lakes Parent Network Conference

Locations:

Bath

Community Health
117 E. Steuben St
Bath, NY 14810
(607) 776-3063

Geneva

Community Health
601B Washington St
Geneva, NY 14456
(315) 781-8448

Newark

Community Health
513 W. Union St
Newark, NY 14513
(315) 573-7577

Ovid

Community Health
7150 N. Main Street
Ovid, NY 14521
(607) 403-0065

Penn Yan

Community Health
112 Kimball Ave
Penn Yan, NY 14527
(315) 536-2752

Port Byron

Community Health
60 Main St
Port Byron, NY 13140
(315) 776-9700

Sodus

Community Health
6692 Middle Rd
Suite 2100
Sodus, NY 14551
(315) 483-1199

Administrative Offices

14 Maiden Lane
Penn Yan, NY 14527
(315) 531-9102

How To Make Without Having Sex.

There are many ways to show affection for your partner without engaging in sexual activity. Sexual activity should come at a point in the relationship where you feel comfortable with each other on many different levels. Here are some tips to make love without having sex:

Focus on the positive: Remember to put positive energy into your relationship with your spouse. What you put into it will be given to you in return. Don't dwell on small things that upset you, address them, and move on from them.

Help others: Do some work in your community to help those less fortunate than yourselves. By helping others, you are creating positive energy around you and your loved one, which leads to increased relationship satisfaction.

Love yourself: In order to love someone else, you must first be able to love yourself. Give yourself everything you deserve, and the rest of the world will follow suit.

Small tokens of affection: Hug, send flowers, go out to the movies, go bowling, go out on double dates, tell them what you love about them.

Building a solid foundation to a relationship creates lifelong success. **For more information, research "How to make love without having sex" online, or visit healthywomen.org.**

A BIG THANK YOU to all those who attended our 15th Annual Adolescent Health Conference last month. It was a huge success! **A few pics from the day:**



Would you like us to visit your program or school to provide evidence based programming on pregnancy prevention, STI prevention, healthy relationships and more?

*** Contact Olivia Catalano or Pat Hall for more information.**



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You can also visit us online at:

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