STI Alert!

Sexually transmitted infections reach all-time highs, notably among young people.

March 30, 2020 By Trent Straube

In what officials with the National Institutes of Health deemed “a major public health crisis worldwide and in the United States,” rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs, also called STDs) are at the highest levels ever. The groups most affected include youth ages 15 to 24, gay and bisexual men, and pregnant women. Left untreated, STIs heighten the risk of contracting and transmitting HIV and can lead to long-term pelvic pain, pregnancy complications and other serious health problems. Here’s a roundup of related news topics:

The Numbers: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data from 2018 show 1.8 million cases of chlamydia, a 19% increase from four years earlier; 583,405 cases of gonorrhea, a 63% hike in the same period; 115,045 cases of primary and secondary syphilis, a 71% jump in that time; and 1,306 cases of congenital syphilis, a 185% spike, also since 2014.

The National STI Coalition: 17 advocacy groups, including several HIV/AIDS organizations, formed this new coalition in February to tackle the growing crisis. But why the surge in STI cases to begin with? “Attacks on evidence-based sex education, lack of access to quality STI care and diminished resources for STI prevention programming, along with reductions in the public health workforce, have created a perfect storm, and STIs have flourished,” says coalition cochair Adriane Casalotti.

STI Testing Rates: A study including HIV-positive men who have sex with men found that they don’t get tested for STIs at optimum rates, including for chlamydia and gonorrhea, which are more common among this population.

STI Disclosure: It’s an embarrassing situation—how do you tell someone that they need to get tested for an STI? Here’s an easy fix: The new web platform TellYourPartner.org allows you to message partners anonymously via text or email.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/sti-alert-young-people