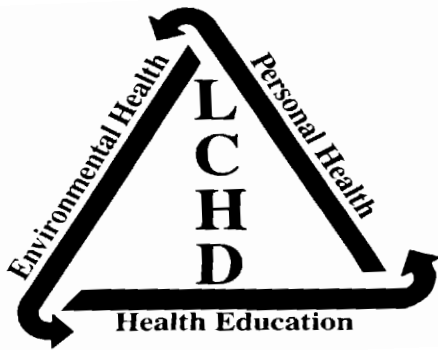


MEDIA RELEASE



Date: April 5, 2019
To: All Media
From: LaSalle County Health Department
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For Immediate Release

“April is STD Awareness Month”

Ottawa, IL -- LaSalle County Health Department would like to acknowledge that April is STD (Sexually Transmitted Disease) Awareness Month. According to the CDC, 2.3 million new cases of the three nationally notifiable sexually transmitted diseases — chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis — were reported by Americans in 2017. It was yet another record-breaking year for STDs in the United States, and the epidemic is showing no signs of slowing down.

Chlamydia remains to be the most common STD with nearly two – thirds of all new infections acquired by patients aged 15 – 24 years of age. In LaSalle County in 2018 we had 343 cases of Chlamydia. Because chlamydia is asymptomatic in the majority of patients, they do not seek medical attention, and it continues to spread and remain highly prevalent.

The second leading notifiable STD was gonorrhea which has increased 18.6 % in the United States. Here in LaSalle County in 2018 we had 69 cases. And syphilis has increased every year since 2001. The CDC noted that the rate of congenital syphilis more than doubled since 2013, highlighting the threat to reproductive aged women. In 2018 LaSalle County had 12 cases.

The good news is that these infections are highly treatable, and easily diagnosed. The cause for concern is because undiagnosed and untreated infections can lead to sterility and long-term consequences including cancer. LaSalle County Health Department works with all medical facilities and clients to assure treatment is adequate and in accordance with CDC guidelines. People can decrease their chances of contracting STD's by practicing abstinence, limiting their number of sexual partners, practicing safer sex, and knowing their partners sexual history. For more information on STD's and whether you should be tested you can contact the LaSalle County Health Department at (815)433-3366 or visit our website at

www.lasallecounty.org.

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