



## Jackson County Health Department

1715 Lansing Avenue • Jackson, MI 49202 • Phone (517) 788-4420 • Fax (517) 788-4373



### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### *STD Awareness Month*

Contact: **Angela Aldrich MSN, RN**

Phone Number: **(517)768-2129**

Email address: [Aaldrich@mijackson.org](mailto:Aaldrich@mijackson.org)

**JACKSON COUNTY, MI** – Three common STDs—chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis—are surging across the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Young people are especially hard-hit. In fact, because reported cases only account for a fraction of the national burden, CDC estimates 15-24-year olds account for *half* of all new sexually transmitted infections each year. Jackson County is no exception. In fact, in 2018 alone, 60% of all reported sexually transmitted infections in Jackson County occurred in the 15-24-year old age group. During that timeframe, there were 613 reported cases of chlamydia, 113 reported cases of gonorrhea, and 0 reported cases of syphilis among this same age group.

“The consequences of STDs are especially severe for young people,” said Angela Aldrich MSN, RN, Director of Personal and Preventative Health Services. “Because chlamydia and gonorrhea often have no symptoms, many sexually active young people do not even realize that they should be regularly be screened for sexually transmitted infections. Unfortunately, lack of detection and treatment can lead to lifelong health issues, particularly for a woman’s reproductive health, including pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility.”

Untreated STDs can also increase a person’s risk of getting HIV, or passing it to a partner if they’re living with HIV.

Early detection through testing is key to avoiding these consequences, yet research has shown many adolescents don’t talk with their providers about sexual health issues *at all* during annual health visits.

**GYT: Get Yourself Tested** is a youth-focused campaign that encourages STD testing. GYT helps young people understand that STD testing is quick, simple, and usually painless. It also underscores the importance of having open and honest conversations with their healthcare provider about their sexual history to ensure they get the right STD tests and other critical information about prevention.

Those who are not comfortable talking with their regular healthcare provider about STDs can also contact the Jackson County Health Department for low-cost screening, education, and treatment.

Getting tested for STDs is one of the most important things a person can do to protect their health, but it’s not the *only* thing. There are several ways to prevent STDs. The most reliable way is to not have sex, but there are many other tried-and-true options: talking openly with partners and medical providers about STDs; using condoms the right way from start to finish; and reducing the number of sexual partners. Those who test positive for an STD should get treated right away – and be sure their partner is also treated to lower the risk of getting infected again.

Visit the [GYT: Get Yourself Tested campaign website](#) for more information on STD testing and prevention.

The Jackson County Health Department offers testing, treatment, education, and counseling for a variety of STDs and HIV during walk-in clinic hours. Regular clinic hours are Monday-Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm (closed 12-1 for lunch). For more information, please contact the STD Clinic at (517) 788-4477.

For more resources regarding STDs, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/std/default.htm>

[https://www.cdc.gov/std/healthcomm/fact\\_sheets.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/std/healthcomm/fact_sheets.htm)

---

###