

STD Awareness – Reaching Youth

This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Every year, sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs, cost the US health care system 17 billion dollars. They cost individuals even more in immediate and long term health consequences.

Welcome to the CDC Audio Rounds. I am Dr. Gail Bolan, Director of the Division of STD Prevention, at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Even though young people represent only 25 percent of the sexually experienced population, nearly half of all STD cases occur in young people 15 to 24. The good news is that most STDs are treatable, and many are curable. Early detection through testing is key, yet stigma, inconsistent or incorrect condom use, and a combination of other behavioral and biological factors contribute to high rates of STDs among teens and young adults.

Primary care physicians, pediatricians, and other health care providers play an important role in ensuring that young people receive correct information and comprehensive health care. Remember, the information you share is respected by your patients. So, what can *you* do as a health care provider?

- Build and maintain a culture of privacy and confidentiality for your adolescent patients.
- Take a sexual history. Discuss it during a patient's first visit, during routine preventive exams, and when there are signs or symptoms of STDs.
- Discuss the five "Ps" with your patients:
 - Partners,
 - Practices,
 - Protection from STDs,
 - Past history of STDs,
 - and Pregnancy prevention.
- Encourage STD testing among sexually active young people.

Of the nearly 16 million sexually active women aged 15 to 25 in the United States, only 38 percent report being tested within the past year for chlamydia. This means that more than 9 million sexually active young women were not screened.

CDC recommends annual chlamydia screening for all sexually active women aged 25 and younger. Screening recommendations for other STDs and additional provider resources can be found at www.cdc.gov/STD.

For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.