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News media calls to David Hass at (630) 682-7979, ext. 7374.

## **DuPage County Health Department can help you prevent Serious health consequences of sexually transmitted diseases**

*19 million infections annually; screening is important since STDs often have no signs or symptoms*

Approximately 19 million new sexually transmitted infections occur annually in the United States and almost half of those are among young people ages 15 to 24, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A screening is important since STDs often have no signs or symptoms.

The DuPage County Health Department's STD Clinic provides screening on Mondays and Wednesdays at its Central Public Health Center, 111 N. County Farm Road, Wheaton, for \$50. The clinic currently operates on a walk-in basis, meaning no appointment is necessary. Hours are 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Clients are screened for Chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis. A medical doctor conducts a physical examination for signs and symptoms of other STDs such as herpes, genital warts or other infections. HIV testing is also available.

STDs such as Chlamydia and gonorrhea are major causes of infertility among women. These and other common STDs can increase the risk of HIV transmission for both women and men.

Nearly 1,400 cases of Chlamydia were diagnosed among DuPage County residents last year, according to the Illinois Department of Public Health. More than half of those cases occurred among young people ages 15 to 24.

There are many effective ways to prevent, diagnose and treat STDs. Screening and early diagnosis are vital to prevent serious health consequences and increased transmission.

Sexually transmitted diseases pose a serious public health threat to Americans, particularly young women, African Americans, men who have sex with men and individuals living in poverty or with limited access to health care. STDs cost the nation's health care system \$15.5 billion annually.

The health department will be coordinating information booths at local colleges to recognize STD Awareness Month in April. The health department is co-sponsoring a May 1 event with the DuPage County Medical Society to update local physicians.

For information, call (630) 682-7400, ext. 7575.

*"We promote health, prevent illness and provide quality service"*