Reproductive Health Education (RH Ed) is an educational newsletter from the Health Advocates at Finger Lakes Community Health. This newsletter covers all reproductive health topics, in addition to related services offered at our health centers.

Let’s talk about V-A-P-I-N-G...

Vaping is an alternative to cigarettes that is based upon a harm reduction model. Vaping is marketed as a “healthy” way to quit smoking. Science has already proven nicotine harms the reproductive system. Sperm and semen quality suffer, egg cells are damaged, and can even cause issues with the fallopian tubes.

Vaping still requires nicotine, but these e-cigarettes are not regulated like traditional cigarettes are. Environmental Science and Technology published a study in 2016 about the harmful emission of vaping, such as irritants and carcinogens. While e-cigarettes have lower levels of emissions than traditional cigarettes, the levels were still in the harmful range. There is still some contention on how much healthier vaping is than smoking cigarettes. The American Heart Association says vaping is not a safer option, yet John Hopkins has published studies showing vaping to be a slightly safer option than cigarettes. Since vaping is relativity new, more time is needed to study how it impacts the human body. University College London Researchers found that vaping does affect sperm and vape juices (flavored vape) affects fertility. Bubblegum juice kills cells in the testicles, and cinnamon juice affected how well the sperm were able to move and swim. Hong Kong medical groups have called for a total ban of e-cigarettes due to their research findings, which are similar to those mentioned already. Smoking or vaping can be hard to quit, but the sooner you stop the quicker your body will heal. For helpful resources on quitting contact your doctor or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Source: https://modernfertility.com/blog/vaping/
Risk Factors for Gonorrhea Include Kissing

A study was conducted in Melbourne, Australia between March 2016 and February 2017 on gonorrhea transmission in bisexual and gay men who have sex with men (MSM). Research published in May (2019) suggests gonorrhea may be transmitted by kissing. The study included 3,677 men, with the median age being 30, and included three categories: kissing only, sex only (with no kissing), and kissing with sex. This research found that MSM who only kissed other men or kissed with sex, contracted gonorrhea. This means you may be able to get gonorrhea from only kissing someone, no other sexual contact required.

To read more the article is published here: https://sti.bmj.com/content/early/2019/04/16/sextrans-2018-053896.info This is new research we wanted to bring your attention to, further research will be required on this topic. Gonorrhea, while currently curable, is becoming antibiotic-resistant (similar to chlamydia). Symptoms of gonorrhea may include sore throat, fever, pain in pelvis, testicle, or vagina, or even pain during sexual intercourse. Anyone who is sexually active is at risk for contracting a sexually transmitted infection, if not using barrier methods such as condoms or getting tested regularly.

It is important to note that while this study focused on MSM populations, gonorrhea may be transmitted through oral, vaginal, or anal sex with an infected partner. At Finger Lakes Community Health, we recommend regular testing annually, even if you are not showing symptoms. A simple urine test or oral swab can be used to detect gonorrhea and chlamydia. Treatment can be given at any of our offices or by the provider who finds the infection.