

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.

## April is **STI Awareness** Month!

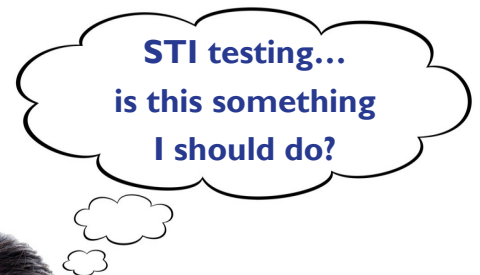
Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) have been around for hundreds of years. Whether straight, gay, married or single, if you are sexually active, you could be exposed to STI's. Shakespeare and Beethoven are only two historical figures that have been confirmed to have had an STI/STD. In our society, the belief is that "only dirty people have STI's" but this misconception is so far from the truth.

The most common sign or symptom of an STI is not those horrible, stomach turning pictures that you see in health class as a student; it's actually nothing like that. Most people who contract an STI are asymptomatic, meaning they show no symptoms, but some common signs may include itching, burning, redness, blisters, warts, discharge or a foul odor.

At FLCH, we recommend regular testing regardless of the status of your relationship. Regular testing means once a year or with every new partner.

Did you know that physical sexual activity is not the only way to spread STI's? Sharing toothbrushes, razors (Yes, the heroin outbreak we are currently experiencing is leading to higher number of STI's), infected clothing (that's why your parents always told you to wash your clothes after you buy them), and sharing towels can also contribute to the spread of these infections.

Testing at our health centers is done in a few different ways. Both men and women can have a urine dip, where you urinate into a cup, and the sample is sent to the lab. This method can test for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia, which are two of the most common STI's. Patients seeking testing can also be examined by a medical provider and/or a rapid HIV test can be performed in the office as well. A blood draw is another option, in which case your blood is sent to the lab for additional testing.



## Partner **SPOTLIGHT:** Family Planning Benefit Program

by Judy Sauer

The **FPBP** may help cover the cost of your reproductive healthcare. NYS residents may be eligible for FREE family planning (FP) services including annual exams, birth control, STI testing and treatment, and even transportation to your appointment! FPBP is a completely confidential New York State program that provides FP services to teens, women and men who meet certain income and residency requirements and who are not already enrolled in Medicaid. This program can be used if you do not want your primary insurance to be billed or even to help cover copays. The income guidelines are generous and allow a single person to make just over \$2,000 per month and still qualify for free services. Finger Lakes Community Health (FLCH) is one of many providers that can enroll you in this FREE program on the same day as your appointment.

## Locations:

### Bath

**Community Health**  
117 E. Steuben St  
Bath, NY 14810  
(607) 776-3063

### Geneva

**Community Health**  
601B Washington St  
Geneva, NY 14456  
(315) 781-8448

### Newark

**Community Health**  
513 W. Union St  
Newark, NY 14513  
(315) 573-7577

### Ovid

**Community Health**  
7150 N. Main Street  
Ovid, NY 14521  
(607) 403-0065

### Penn Yan

**Community Health**  
112 Kimball Ave  
Penn Yan, NY 14527  
(315) 536-2752

### Port Byron

**Community Health**  
60 Main St  
Port Byron, NY 13140  
(315) 776-9700

### Sodus

**Community Health**  
6692 Middle Rd  
Suite 2100  
Sodus, NY 14551  
(315) 483-1199

### Administrative Offices

14 Maiden Lane  
Penn Yan, NY 14527  
(315) 531-9102



### National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day: April 10th

One in four (1: 4) new HIV cases occurs in people age 13-24. With eighty percent (80%) of HIV cases among young people, 13-24 happen in youth of color. Even with this information, only 23% of sexually active high school students get tested for HIV. Join us on April 10th as we spread awareness about how to prevent, test and treat HIV.

HIV is a virus that affects the white blood cell count in your body. While medical progress has come far, resulting in this infection no longer being referred to as a "death sentence" as it was in the 80's, it still requires careful management to suppress the viral load and keep infected patients healthy. With proper treatment and medication, those with HIV/AIDS can live long healthy lives.

There are medications like PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) to help decrease the possibility of contracting HIV for high risk individuals and PeP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) for those who have possibly been exposed. To get an HIV test, a patient can have a mouth swab (Oraquick) performed, a finger prick (rapid HIV), or a blood draw. Remember, education is prevention. NYS guidelines now require patients in a medical field to be offered an HIV test once per year; therefore, next time your doctor offers you a test you now know why!

## Where are we (FLCH) this month?

- **April 5 & 7:** South Seneca & Romulus Schools (*ABC's of STI's and Contraception 101*)
- **April 13:** Bodies, Boundaries and Behavior Training: Proactive Strategies for Addressing Sexuality Issues in People with Developmental Disabilities. Ithaca. NY
- **April 16-20:** National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association Conference
- **April 21:** Southern Tier Sexual Health Coalition Meeting. Bath, NY  
Finger Lakes Sexual Health Coalition Meeting, Canandaigua
- **October 6th:** **Save The Date!** 2016 Adolescent Health Conference. Holiday Inn, Waterloo, NY.

\*\* Would you like us to visit your program or school to provide evidence based programming on pregnancy prevention, STI prevention, healthy relationships and more? For more information go to [www.localcommunityhealth.com](http://www.localcommunityhealth.com) or contact us today to schedule a time!



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