Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) are infections that people get by having sex with someone who is already infected. These infections are spread from person to person by having unprotected oral, vaginal, and anal sex, and through the sharing of body fluids, (semen, vaginal fluids, and blood). Touching or rubbing infected body parts or sharing needles is another way of contracting STDs.

Some STDs can be treated and cured and others cannot. Common STDs that can be treated and cured are Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Syphilis, and vaginal infections. These STDs are caused by bacteria. Common STDs that are NOT curable but are treatable are Genital Herpes, Genital Warts (HPV, Condyloma) Hepatitis B, and HIV/AIDS. These STDs are caused by viruses.

STDs left untreated can be painful and make you very sick and some can even cause death. Some STDs that go untreated for a long period of time can make males and females infertile. STDs can also cause birth defects or other health problems in newborns.

Common signs or symptoms of some STDs may be unusual vaginal or penile discharge, unusual odor, any type of bump, lump, sore, or rash, itching, swelling of lymph nodes, painful urination, pain or burning with intercourse, or lower abdominal pain. Some STDs can and may go unnoticed due to the absence of external signs or vague symptoms that can be attributed to something else. Testing is the only way to be sure that you don’t have any STD.

The sooner an STD is found the better. You should see a health care provider as soon as possible if any of these symptoms develop. You should always talk openly with your partner about STDs and recommend that you both be screened prior to engaging in any sexual activity.

STDs can be prevented. Knowing you are free from STDs will prevent you from passing any to another individual. Abstinence is the only way to prevent STDs, using condoms during any type of sexual contact will also prevent the spread of some STDs. Don’t share any type of needles, including body piercing and tattoo needles. And don’t have sex with someone who has signs of STDs.
Contact the Central Michigan District Health Department with any questions or concerns.

Arenac 989-846-6541  Gladwin 989-426-9431  Osceola 989-832-5532
Clare 989-539-4449  Isabella 989-773-5921  Roscommon 989-366-9166

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department which serves the residents of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon Counties.