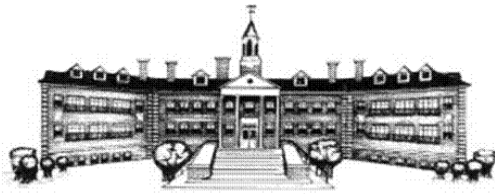


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For Immediate Release

Sexually Transmitted Diseases Awareness

April 4, 2011

Contact: Diane Kintner, R.N., C.N.P. (740) 349-6687

Licking County, OH- The Licking County Health Department's Nurse Practitioner, Diane Kintner, CNP reports that April is Sexually Transmitted Diseases Awareness Month. "According to the American Social Health Association (ASHA), nineteen million new sexually transmitted infections occur every year in the United States, with nearly half of them occurring in people between the ages of 15 and 24", said Kintner.

There are more than 20 different types of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) or infections. Common STDs are chlamydia, gonorrhea, HPV, herpes, and syphilis. STDs are spread during close sexual activity which includes oral, vaginal, and anal sex. Left untreated, they can cause serious health problems which include cervical cancer, inability to have children, or brain damage. Chlamydia diagnoses alone have increased nationally by 19% since 2006.

Sexually active persons can protect themselves from STDs by using latex condoms or by having sex with only one partner who is known not to be infected with an STD. It is advisable to watch for any symptoms of an STD such as discharge, burning, or pelvic or abdominal pain. However, it is important to know that many infected persons have no symptoms. They do not realize that they are passing along an STD when they have sex. Therefore, routine STD testing is advised for many individuals, especially those who have multiple sex partners, those who do not consistently use condoms, or who engage in other high-risk behaviors such as using drugs or alcohol.

The only way to determine if one has an STD is to be checked by a health care provider. The Licking County Health Department offers a free, confidential STD clinic each Tuesday by appointment only. Appointments can be made by calling (740) 349-6535.

For more information, please visit: www.lickingcohealth.org or visit: www.cdc.gov/std.

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