

## April is STI Awareness Month

Dear Valued Patient,

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) continue to be an epidemic in the U.S. with more than 2.4 million chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis cases reported across the country in 2023, demanding our attention now more than ever!<sup>1</sup> The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released the new STI Surveillance Data and highlighted the following trends:<sup>1</sup>

**Over  
600,000**

Gonorrhea Cases Reported<sup>1</sup>



**Almost half (48.2%)** of reported STI cases were among adolescents and young adults aged 15–24 years<sup>1</sup>

**Over  
1.6 million**

Cases of chlamydia reported<sup>1</sup>

Two of the most common STIs, chlamydia and gonorrhea, are bacterial infections that can be spread through sexual contact. Over 84% of chlamydia and gonorrhea infections are asymptomatic and, if left undiagnosed and untreated, can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility.<sup>2,3</sup>

The good news is that these infections typically can be easily treated, so getting tested is just part of staying healthy. The CDC has also identified a highly prevalent STI called *Mycoplasma genitalium* (M. gen) with a 18.9% prevalence rate in symptomatic women attending sexual health clinics.<sup>4,5</sup> It is important to be aware of M. gen because it shares similar symptoms to chlamydia and gonorrhea, but the treatment is different.<sup>6-8</sup> This is why it's important to talk to your healthcare provider about which tests are right for you.

There are several guidelines for STI testing based on your age range.

- **15-24 years old:** CDC recommends opt-out screening for chlamydia and gonorrhea in all young women unless their records are flagged at check-in as having had a negative test within the past 12 months, or they declined to be tested.<sup>9,10</sup>
- **25-45 years old:** Chlamydia and gonorrhea screening is recommended for women at increased risk of infection, and HIV testing may also be required.<sup>10</sup> Risk factors include:
  - Acquiring a new sex partner
  - Having more than one sex partner
  - Having a sex partner with concurrent partners
  - Inconsistent condom use in non-monogamous relationships
  - Having a sex partner who has an STI

STI testing is an important part of protecting your overall health, reproductive health, and fertility. Your provider may recommend certain testing based on your age, while other tests may be right for you depending on the presence of symptoms or if you have certain risk factors. Getting tested is easy—all your provider needs is a simple, painless sample using a self-collected or clinician-collected vaginal swab or a urine cup. During STI Awareness Month, we want women to feel empowered to take control of their health. We encourage all women to reach out to their healthcare provider to schedule their well-woman exam for 2025. Your well-woman visit is covered by the Affordable Care Act\*, meaning there may be no co-pay, deductible, or out-of-pocket cost.<sup>11</sup>

**Call today to schedule your well-woman exam!**

Best regards,

\* Patients should consult their healthcare plans to verify coverage.

**References:** **1.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Overview of STIs in 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/sti-statistics/annual/summary.html>. Accessed January 10, 2025. **2.** Detels R, Green AM, Klausner JD, et al. The incidence and correlates of symptomatic and asymptomatic Chlamydia trachomatis and Neisseria gonorrhoeae infections in selected populations in five countries. *Sex Transm Dis.* 2011;38(6):503-509. **3.** Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) - CDC Fact Sheet. [https://www.cdc.gov/pid/about/?CDC\\_AAref\\_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/std/pid/stdfact-pid.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/pid/about/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/std/pid/stdfact-pid.htm). Last reviewed: December 13, 2023. Accessed January 10, 2025. **4.** Manhart L, et al. *Mycoplasma genitalium* in the US (MyGeniUS): Surveillance Data From Sexual Health Clinics in 4 US Regions. [CID]. 2023; 77 (10):1449–1459. Published July 4, 2023. Accessed January 10, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cid/ciad405>. **5.** Workowski, et al. Sexually Transmitted Infections Treatment Guidelines 2021. *MMWR Recomm Rep* 2021;70 **6.** CDC. Chlamydia Fact Sheet. Center for Disease Control and Prevention website. Last reviewed February 20, 2024. Accessed January 10, 2025. [https://www.cdc.gov/chlamydia/about/?CDC\\_AAref\\_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/std/chlamydia/stdfact-chlamydia.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/chlamydia/about/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/std/chlamydia/stdfact-chlamydia.htm) **7.** CDC. Gonorrhea Fact Sheet. Center for Disease Control and Prevention website. Last reviewed February 15, 2024. Accessed January 10, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea/stdfact-gonorrhea.htm> **8.** CDC. M. gen Fact Sheet. Center for Disease Control and Prevention website. Last reviewed November 30, 2023. Accessed January 10, 2025. [https://www.cdc.gov/mgen/about/?CDC\\_AAref\\_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/std/mgen/stdfact-Mgen.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/mgen/about/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/std/mgen/stdfact-Mgen.htm) **9.** Owusu-Edusei K, et al. Cost-Effectiveness of Opt-Out Chlamydia Testing for High-Risk Young Women in the U.S. *Am J Prev Med.* 2016;51(2):216-24. doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2016.01.007. **10.** CDC. Sexually Transmitted Treatment Guidelines. <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/screening-recommendations.htm> Last reviewed: March 22, 2024. Accessed January 10, 2025. **11.** CDC. STD Preventive Service Coverage Tables <https://www.cdc.gov/high-quality-care/hcp/resources/std-preventive-service-coverage.html>. Last reviewed February 16, 2024. Accessed January 10, 2025.