



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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CONTACT: Corey Egel | 916.440.7259 | CDPHpress@cdph.ca.gov

Reported Sexually Transmitted Diseases Reach a New High in California

SACRAMENTO – A record number of Californians were diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease (STD) in 2017, according to a new [report](#) released by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). More than 300,000 cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and early syphilis were reported: a 45 percent increase compared to five years ago.

Particularly concerning, in 2017, there were 30 stillbirths due to congenital syphilis in California. This is the highest number reported since 1995.

STDs can cause a number of serious health problems. If left untreated, chlamydia and gonorrhea can cause pelvic inflammatory disease and lead to infertility, ectopic pregnancy, and chronic pelvic pain. Syphilis can cause permanent loss of vision, hearing and other neurologic problems.

Chlamydia and gonorrhea rates are highest among people under age 30. Rates of chlamydia are highest among young women, and males account for the majority of syphilis and gonorrhea cases.

“STDs are preventable by consistently using condoms, and many STDs can be cured with antibiotics,” said CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Smith. “Regular testing and treatment are very important for people who are sexually active, even for people who have no symptoms. Most people infected with an STD do not know it.”

CDPH is collaborating with local health departments and organizations [throughout the state](#) to raise awareness. CDPH is working with the California Department of Education and community groups to implement the newly enacted California Healthy Youth Act, which mandates comprehensive STD/HIV prevention education in schools.

Other state efforts leverage innovative strategies such as courses for medical providers and teachers, expedited partner treatment to local clinics, and free and low cost online ordering options for home delivery of condoms and STD test kits. For more information, visit the CDPH [Sexually Transmitted Diseases Control Branch](#).

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