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Governor

Dear Colleague,

April marks the annual observance of STD Awareness Month. This month is an opportunity to bring a renewed sense of enthusiasm and focus to STD awareness and prevention efforts.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has announced the theme of this year's STD Awareness Month is "[Treat Me Right](#)," a message for both patients and providers. The CDC is reaching out to healthcare providers to encourage fostering trusting patient-provider relationships. Patients are encouraged to learn about what they can do to stay safe and healthy, and how to directly ask their provider for the care that they need and deserve.

Specifically, CDC is raising awareness so that patients are prepared to discuss their sexual history with providers and learn how to start the conversation if their provider doesn't bring up sexual history. [STD Awareness Month tips and tools for patients](#) developed by the CDC include:

- Qualities to look for in a provider
- Sexual history questions to expect
- Risk factors for STDs
- [How to bring up sex or STD testing](#) with a provider

The CDC is also encouraging providers to put the focus on their relationships with patients so they can deliver unbiased, quality care. [Additional STD Awareness Month tips and tools for providers](#) include:

- [Guide to taking a thorough sexual history](#)
- List of [essential sexual health questions to ask of patients](#)
- Tips for productive conversations with patients
- Guidelines for testing and treatment

Additional resources to promote STD Awareness Month, including "Treat Me Right" graphics, sample social media posts, infographics, videos, and more can be found on the [CDC STD Awareness Month webpage](#).

To help with your STD Awareness Month promotional efforts, we are providing a list of other resources including existing awareness campaign materials and talking points to focus on when interacting with local media outlets.



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- [STD Awareness Resource Website \(CDC NPIN\)](#) – Created by the CDC for STD Awareness Month, this website contains tools and resources for STD prevention, including [tips and tools on how to share STD prevention messages with media outlets](#).
- [Take Charge of Your Sexual Health \(NCSH\)](#) – Created by the National Coalition for Sexual Health, this guide for youth and adults provides information about recommended screenings, vaccinations and counseling.
- [Get Tested \(CDC\)](#) – Created by the CDC, this webpage provides an additional list of national campaigns targeting HIV, STD, and Hepatitis Testing
- [Infographic Resources for STD Prevention](#)– This webpage includes a variety of STD-related infographics for various audiences.

#### Youth Resources:

- [Get Yourself Tested \(GYT\) Campaign](#) – This youthful campaign was created by the National Coalition of STD Directors, MTV and other partners to normalize STD testing and treatment among youth. Local health departments can order free promotional materials and can [add a widget](#) to their website to help visitors find local STD testing location.
- [Yes Means Test! Campaign](#) – This project was created by the American Sexual Health Association (ASHA) to promote STD testing among youth and young adults. The site offers shareable graphics, a tool for users to find their nearest clinic and showcases key statistics about young people and STD risk.
- [Condom Access Project \(CAP\)](#) – This project of Essential Access Health provides free condoms to California teens that need them. Depending on where youth live, they can order condoms online or pick up free condoms at a teen-friendly location. Youth can learn more about CAP at the [Teen Source webpage at TeenSource.org](#).

#### Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Resources:

- [What Gay, Bisexual and Other MSM Need to Know About STDs \(CDC Fact Sheet\)](#)
- [LGBT-friendly provider directory \(GLMA\)](#)
- [they2ze.org \(digital resource to connect transgender spectrum youth and providers to inclusive health services\)](#)
- [For Men Only: Your Sexual Health \(NCSD patient resource\)](#)



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HIV Prevention Resources:

- [STD Prevention is HIV Prevention \(CDC STD Awareness Month Resources\)](#)
- [HIV/AIDS campaigns \(CDC NPIN\)](#)
- [Ask Me About PrEP campaign by Altamed](#)

Talking Points for STD Awareness Month:

- STDs are common and increasing.
- Youth are more likely to get an STD compared to older age groups.
- STDs can cause serious health problems.
- Many STDs can be prevented with the correct and consistent use of condoms.
- The most common symptom of an STD is no symptom at all. The only way for someone to know they have an STD is to get tested.
- STD prevention is HIV prevention. If someone has an STD, seeing a healthcare provider for proper treatment will reduce their risk of getting HIV.

Data and additional information and resources may be found at the [California STD Control Branch webpage at std.ca.gov](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Sandee Differding at [Sandra.Differding@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Sandra.Differding@cdph.ca.gov).  
If you obtain any press coverage, please feel free to share it with us.

Sincerely,

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