

For Health Professionals

Health Alerts

Health Alert Advisory #121 - Syphilis Cases - January 12, 2005

Beginning in 2001, the NYSDOH reported a progressive increase in the number of confirmed cases of early infectious syphilis. Initially, cases were identified predominantly in New York City and the surrounding metropolitan area counties. Recently, the Erie County STD clinic has also experienced a re-emergence of syphilis as evidenced by small clusters of confirmed cases within Erie County and an adjoining county. Of much concern is a recently diagnosed case with early syphilis who admits to several hundred unprotected sexual encounters with both women and men in various locations including parking lots of an exotic male dance club, local bars and nightclubs, and following other social events both in Erie County and in Canada.

All health care providers should be aware of patients presenting with lesions and rashes indicative of infectious syphilis. However, serologic testing for syphilis (e.g., RPR) should be routinely performed on all patients presenting with symptoms of any sexually transmitted disease (e.g., gonorrhea, Chlamydia), as well as for those individuals who have: a known exposure to another individual recently diagnosed with an STD; a history of multiple partners; or other behaviors that place them at increased risk for STD.

For more information and to report any confirmed or suspect cases of syphilis, please contact Ms. Lynda Suchman at the Erie County STD Clinic (858-7853).

Please visit the following link for additional information on Syphilis: http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/dstd/Fact_Sheets/Syphilis_Facts.htm.