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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Heather Burnette, PIO
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February 12, 2024

Condom Use More Important Than Ever

As we approach Valentine's Day and National Condom Day, the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department reminds the community that condom use is vital to stopping the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and syphilis.

Northwest Ohio recently reached a historical high in the number of syphilis cases, a stark reminder that prevention through condom use will help keep our community healthy.

Syphilis can be spread through all modes of sexual contact (oral, vaginal and anal), and is best detected using three site testing. Three site testing is a method that goes beyond testing urine for infection. If syphilis or any STI is suspected, ask your healthcare provider about three site testing, or schedule an appointment with the health department by calling (419) 213-4100 or visiting our website, www.lucascountyhealth.com.

Pregnant women who are infected with syphilis pose a particular risk of spreading it to their baby. Syphilis during pregnancy has been proven to increase the risks for stillbirth, miscarriage, infant death, and maternal morbidity. Timely syphilis testing and treatment are essential in preventing these outcomes for mothers and their babies.

If you are sexually active, the following actions can lower your chances of getting syphilis:

- Being in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who has been tested and does not have syphilis.
- Using condoms the right way every time you have sex. (Condoms prevent the spread of syphilis by preventing contact with a sore. However, sores may occur in areas not covered by a condom. Contact with these sores can still transmit syphilis.)

Condoms are available for free at the health department during business hours.

Syphilis Cases in NW Ohio: 2011-2023

