



## For Immediate Release

Contact: Susan Cerniglia, Communications Manager  
Washtenaw County Health Department  
[ringlers@washtenaw.org](mailto:ringlers@washtenaw.org)  
734-544-6759

### **STD Rates Increasing in Washtenaw County** *Know your status for STD Awareness Month*

YPSILANTI, Mich., April 30, 2018 – April is Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) Awareness Month. STD rates continue to reach record levels in Washtenaw County. The Washtenaw County Health Department encourages residents to get tested for STDs and to take steps to prevent infections.

“If you’re sexually active, it is essential to get tested and get immediate treatment when necessary,” says Heather Vaquera, prevention specialist at the Washtenaw County Health Department. “If your health care provider doesn’t bring up testing, be sure to ask about it.”

There were [560 cases of gonorrhea](#) in Washtenaw County in 2017 – the highest number of cases in 25 years. Chlamydia and syphilis rates have also increased in recent years. There were 1,701 cases of chlamydia and 43 cases of syphilis in 2017.

These increases mirror statewide and national trends. There are about 20 million new cases of STDs each year in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). About half of these infections are in people between the ages of 15 and 24.

While gonorrhea, chlamydia and syphilis are preventable and treatable, they can cause serious health problems if left ignored. Understanding risk, abstaining from sex, reducing your number of sexual partners and consistently and correctly using condoms are all effective prevention strategies.

[Local HIV and STD testing providers](#) include the Washtenaw County Health Department, Planned Parenthood, Unified and the Corner Health Center. Many primary health care providers and women's health care providers also offer testing and treatment.

The Washtenaw County Health Department also provides free condoms and can help with partner notification, treatment and connecting you to resources. PreP and PEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis and post-exposure prophylaxis, which are prevention options for people at high risk of getting HIV) and vaccinations for hepatitis A, hepatitis B and human papillomavirus virus (HPV) are available as well. Learn more at [washtenaw.org/sexualhealth](http://washtenaw.org/sexualhealth).

### **Washtenaw County Health Department**

The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs.

The Washtenaw County Health Department has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board. Visit us at [washtenaw.org/health](http://washtenaw.org/health) or call 734-544-6700.

###

Washtenaw County Health Department  
555 Towner Street • Ypsilanti, MI 48198  
Phone: 734-544-6700 • Fax: 734-544-6705  
[washtenaw.org/health](http://washtenaw.org/health)



Environmental Health Division  
705 N. Zeeb Road • Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
Phone: 734-222-3800 • Fax: 734-222-3930  
[washtenaw.org/health](http://washtenaw.org/health)