

April 4, 2018

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN ST. LUCIE COUNTY ENCOURAGES PREVENTION AND TESTING OF SYPHILIS DURING STD AWARENESS MONTH



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St. Lucie County, FL –The Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie joins the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in recognizing April as STD Awareness Month. Throughout the month, DOH-St. Lucie will be hosting and participating in screening and educational events to raise STD awareness.

This year's efforts focus on the relationship between healthcare providers and patients with the theme: **Treat Me Right** to protect patients' sexual health as a provider and stand up for your own sexual health as a patient.

"To prevent the spread of STDs or STIs, it is important to remember the 3T's (Talk, Test and Treat). Talk to you partner and healthcare provider about risk factors and methods to reduce your chances of getting an STD, get tested, and get treated if you're infected, to avoid additional health problems or further the spread," said Clint Sperber, Health Officer for the Department of Health in St. Lucie County.

Syphilis infection rates have spiked in all regions of the country and across almost every ethnicity and age group. Some populations, such as gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, and women are seeing higher increases than other groups. Cases of congenital syphilis (babies born with syphilis) are also increasing at an alarming rate. Having syphilis also makes it easier to get HIV and Hepatitis C.

To prevent the spread of all STDs, including syphilis, DOH-St. Lucie provides screening, counseling, treatment and partner notification services to persons infected with or suspected of being infected with STDs.

The only way to avoid syphilis and other STDs is to not have sex. However, if you are sexually active, you can do the following things to lower your chances of infection:

- Be in a long-term, monogamous relationship with a partner who has tested negative for syphilis and other STDs;
- Use condoms the right way every time you have sex;
- Talk to your health care provider about getting testing for syphilis and other STDs or [locate a clinic](#) near you for free, fast and confidential testing;
- If you test positive for syphilis or other STDs, get treated right away and be sure your sexual partner is treated as well to reduce the risk of re-infection.

FREE TESTING

April 2018 Outreach Events
Okeechobee, St Lucie, Martin and Indian River Counties
Free and confidential testing
for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), HIV and Hepatitis

<u>Day/Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
April 4, Wednesday, 2pm-4pm	Douglas Park <u>582 NW 13th Ave, Okeechobee FL</u>
April 7, Saturday, 9am-1pm	Taylor Point Apartments <u>4885 38th Circle</u>
April 13, Friday, 9am-1pm	Rogers Market <u>17068 SW Palm Beach Street, Indiantown, FL</u>
April 15, Sunday, 12pm-3pm	Pride Fest 2018 - at River Walk Center <u>600 N Indian River Drive, Ft Pierce FL</u>
April 16, Monday 3pm-5:30pm	Golden Gate Center <u>3225 SE Dixie Highway, Stuart FL</u>
April 18, Wednesday 9am-1pm	Indian River State College <u>2400 SW Salerno Rd, Stuart FL</u>
April 23, Monday 9am-1pm	Rines Market <u>15500 SW Trail Drive, Indiantown FL</u>
April 26, Thursday 1:30pm-3:30pm	Whispering Pines Park <u>800 SW Darwin Blvd., Port St Lucie FL</u>
April 27, Friday 9am-1pm	FL Dept. of Health in Martin County <u>3441 SW Willoughby Blvd., Stuart FL</u>
April 30, Monday 1pm-3pm	Pioneer Park <u>2901 Ave M, Ft. Pierce FL</u>
May 2, Wednesday 2pm-4pm	46 th Ave Villas <u>2828 NW 46th Ave, Okeechobee FL</u>

DOH-St. Lucie will partner and host several outreach events in April for STD Awareness Month. Testing is free for STDs and HIV. No appointment is necessary but a photo ID is needed.

For more information on STD Awareness Month, visit the CDC's [webpage](#). To learn more about the department's STD program and services, click [here](#).

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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