

# EXPECT MORE

Everyone Deserves Good Health

7<sup>th</sup> Annual National LGBT Health Awareness Week

## SEXUAL HEALTH

LGBT people often do not have access to the information and resources to keep themselves sexually healthy. Some healthcare providers are not familiar with safe sex methods for LGBT people and may be uncomfortable discussing sexual practices in general.

**The good news is that HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are preventable and many are curable. Here are some ways to protect your health:**

- **Play Safe!** Use a condom, dental dam or latex barrier. When used consistently and correctly, they are extremely effective in preventing many STIs and HIV.
- **Find an LGBT-friendly provider.** Ask your friends, call your local LGBT community center to inquire about referrals or log onto services such as <http://www.gayhealth.com/> to research in greater detail. Even if you do not have health insurance, LGBT-friendly providers can often be found at free and low-cost clinics.
- **Talk to your healthcare provider.** A healthcare provider can help you make informed decisions about testing, protection and screening based on your gender, age and health.
- **Test regularly for STIs.** If you're sexually active and not in a committed, mutually monogamous relationship, you should be tested every six months for HIV, syphilis, gonorrhea and Chlamydia.
- **Know your status.** It's your responsibility to protect yourself and your partners by knowing your (and their) HIV status. Free, rapid testing is available from many health departments and clinics.
- **Get vaccinated for Hepatitis A and B.** It's one of the most effective things that you can do to protect your health.
- **Men and anyone participating in anal sex should consider an anal Pap smear.** You can contract many STIs through anal sex. A Pap smear is simple and painless. If you have HIV, you may be at even greater risk for other STIs. Talk to your healthcare provider.
- **Women and transmen with an intact cervix should consider screening for cervical cancer.** Consult with your healthcare provider about screening for cervical cancer.
- **People under age 26 should consider getting an HPV vaccination, even if you have**

**For more information, please see:**

The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States ([www.siecus.org](http://www.siecus.org))  
American Social Health Association (<http://www.ashastd.org/>)

[www.lgbthealth.net](http://www.lgbthealth.net)

