Understanding and Avoiding Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

What is STD? 1
STD stands for sexually transmitted disease. STDs can be passed from person to person through bacteria and viruses in body fluids. STDs can cause life-threatening illness. STDs may cause:
• Sterility
• Stress
• Birth defects
• Lasting health problems
• Major illnesses such as HIV, cancer or blindness
• Death

STDs may harm pregnant mom and baby.2
Pregnant women can get the same STDs as women who are not pregnant. Many types of STDs can cause serious harm to unborn babies.

Take care of yourself.3
Here are some steps you can take to protect you from STDs. Be sure to talk with your partner(s) about safe sex.
• Use a condom (rubber) every time you have sex. There are male and female condoms. For each sex act, you need a new condom.
• Get a regular checkup for STDs, even if you don’t have symptoms.
• Make sure your partner gets tested before you have sex.
• Do not have sex if your partner has signs of an STD such as a rash, sores or discharge (fluid) from the genital area.
• Avoid drugs and alcohol. If you are drunk or high, you may not make safe choices about sex.
• Abstinence. Not having sex is the best way to avoid an STD.

Some common types of STDs:4
• HIV and AIDS
• Genital herpes
• Gonorrhea
• Syphilis
• Chlamydia
• Hepatitis A, B and C
• Human papillomavirus (genital warts)
• Trichomoniasis

More than 20 diseases can be transmitted through sex5. Here are some tips that can help you protect your health.
What are the signs of an STD?  

- Pain or burning from the penis, vagina or anus when you use the toilet.
- Discharge from the genitals that has an odd color or smell.
- Pain in the abdomen (women) or testicles (men).
- Lumps, sores, rashes or itching around the penis, vagina or anus.
- Some STDs have no symptoms. It is important to talk with your doctor if you believe you may have been exposed to an STD.

We are here to help you.

Talk with your doctor or nurse to learn more about STDs. You also can call the 24/7 NurseLine, toll-free. Call your local health department to find the closest STD clinic. To find out even more about STDs and another way to get a referral to an STD clinic, call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or visit the CDC website.

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<th>Services</th>
<th>Medi-Cal</th>
<th>L.A. Care</th>
<th>Healthy Families Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer Care Center</td>
<td>1-800-407-4627</td>
<td>1-888-285-7801</td>
<td>1-800-845-3604</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTY</td>
<td>1-888-757-6034</td>
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<tr>
<td>24/7 NurseLine TTY</td>
<td>1-800-224-0336</td>
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<td>1-800-368-4424</td>
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<td>Anthem Website</td>
<td>anthem.com/ca</td>
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<td>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): 1-800-232-4636</td>
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The TTY lines are only for members with hearing or speech loss.