



Jackson County Department of Public Health

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STI Awareness Week

April 14-20 is national Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Awareness Week and the Jackson County Department of Public Health (JCDPH) encourages you to “GYT: Get Yourself Tested”! STI testing at our clinic is comprehensive, completely confidential, youth-friendly, and respectful of all. We don’t stop there to help you stay healthy, JCDPH also offers treatment methods if you test positive for an STI, and free condoms to help you and your partner practice safer-sex after getting tested.

The CDC estimates that about 20 percent of the U.S. population, approximately one in five people in the U.S., had an STI on any given day in 2018, and STIs acquired that year cost the American health care system nearly \$16 billion in health care costs alone. Since the new year our county clinic has seen 54 cases of Chlamydia, 1 case of Gonorrhea, and 4 cases of Syphilis, all of which are lower than their numbers for this time last year. That means that we are decreasing our STI rates Jackson County!

The only way to not risk any consequences of sexuality is to practice abstinence, which is choosing to not be sexually active. If you choose to be sexually active, then there are some very successful strategies you and your partner can employ to keep each other as risk-free as possible. The CDC recommends to “Prepare Before You’re There” and has created a campaign of the same name to help us all out. The big points are to have the necessary conversations with your partner about: consent and having a healthy sexuality together; getting tested together; using condoms to prevent STI transmission; how to not introduce STIs into your relationship. Having these conversations before sexual activity can go a long way to not only preventing STIs, but also many problems related to sexual activity within your romantic relationship.

To schedule a confidential appointment at the JCDPH, call 828-586-8994. To obtain more resources related to the “GYT: Get Yourself Tested” and the “Prepare Before You’re There” campaigns visit www.cdc.gov and type “STI Awareness Week” into the Search Tool.

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