

SPOTLIGHT ON STD Prevention and Control Programs

For more than 50 years, CDC has worked with state and local health department programs to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). These programs are critical to STD prevention and control across the nation — **and they are a good investment.** Together, we have made great strides in protecting the health of our communities. Several of these key achievements are highlighted here.



Preventing Pelvic Inflammatory Disease and Infertility

CDC-funded STD programs prevent an estimated 21,000 cases of pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and 4,000 cases of infertility each year. This saves up to **\$77 million** in health care costs every year.



Reducing Syphilis

A CDC study suggested that investing just **10 cents per person** per year in syphilis prevention can decrease the number of syphilis cases by **over 30%**.



Steep Drops in Gonorrhea Rates

One study found that since the 1970s, CDC-funded STD programs have prevented 32 million cases of gonorrhea. This represents a **75% decline** in the national gonorrhea rate — and a total savings of **\$3.7 billion**.

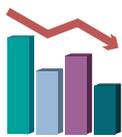


One-on-One Counseling That Works

Research has shown that that interactive, client-centered HIV/STD behavioral counseling led to a **30% reduction** in new STD cases after just 6 months.

STD Prevention: The Role of State and Local Programs

These successes are not a coincidence. CDC provides funding, resources, training, and technical assistance to all states and some territories and local STD programs.¹ Programs vary in size and structure, but the core functions described below are essential to all. These nuts and bolts of STD programs help prevent STDs — and their potentially life-threatening effects.



Public Health Surveillance

Surveillance happens at the local, state, and national levels. State health departments send reports of new STD cases to CDC. Diseases are then tracked nationally to identify patterns, trends, and STD outbreaks.



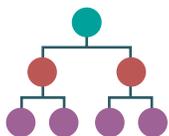
Testing

State and local programs help make STD testing services accessible — especially to individuals without health insurance who are at high risk, and to people who have been exposed to an STD.



Treatment and Linkage to Care

When a new STD case is reported, Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) find the infected person, help them get treatment, and help identify sexual partners who may have been exposed. Many times they help link partners to testing and treatment, too.



Contact Tracing

DIS go into communities to find cases of STDs — and to prevent new cases. A typical day in the life of a DIS might include phone calls, online research, or even knocking on doors to track down people who may have been exposed to certain STDs so that they can get tested and treated.



Behavioral Counseling

STD program staff work one-on-one with patients to determine their STD risk, set goals to lower their risk, and develop a plan to meet those goals. Behavioral counseling staff are trained not to judge patients, and instead be their ally in a potentially difficult situation.



Education

Education is one of the most powerful tools for preventing STDs. It takes many forms — hosting workshops, collaborating with schools or community groups, sharing information with health providers, or providing educational resources like fact sheets or websites.

¹ Some states and localities also use their own funding to further support STD prevention.