

# 2004 National STD Prevention Conference

**All Findings Embargoed Until:**  
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**CONTACT: Media Information Line**  
1-866-584-5030  
**On-Site Media Center**  
(215) 409-4760 or  
(917) 679-1245

## **Research Shows Growing Challenges In Controlling STDs Among Gay and Bisexual Men**

*Philadelphia (March 8) – Findings from late-breaking research presented at the 2004 National STD Prevention Conference, March 8-11 in Philadelphia, adds to the growing body of evidence regarding the impact of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among gay and bisexual men. (Late-breaking abstracts include research submitted after the initial conference deadline.)*

### ***New challenges in confronting gonorrhea and syphilis among MSM***

A CDC study conducted in San Diego showed that men who have sex with men (MSM) with syphilis were 45 percent less likely to be diagnosed during the primary stage of infection than heterosexual men and, therefore, remained infectious longer. MSM were also less likely than heterosexual men in the study to have contact information for their partners (16 percent vs. 40 percent). The findings suggest that traditional syphilis control methods may not be as effective among MSM as other populations, since they rely in part on prompt identification and treatment of patients and their partners (Abstract 1518). Research conducted in Seattle & King County showed a rapid emergence of gonorrhea cases that were resistant to treatment with the commonly used antibiotic, ciprofloxacin. Overall, researchers saw a four-fold increase in the proportion of resistant cases between the third and fourth quarters of 2003 – from 3.8 percent to 16.5 percent of cases. Ninety percent of these resistant cases were among MSM (Abstract 1520).

“These new findings reinforce the need for specially tailored STD prevention programs that address the needs of men who have sex with men,” said Dr. John Douglas, director of CDC’s STD prevention activities, one of the conference’s sponsors.

In addition, an analysis of an ongoing MSM-specific initiative launched by public health officials in New York City shows that a focus on overall health needs leads to HIV and STD screening. Public health officials found that when a broad range of on-site health services – including HIV,

chlamydia, and gonorrhea screening, influenza and hepatitis A/B vaccinations, and smoking cessation services – were offered in venues such as bars and nightclubs, more than 30 percent of men in attendance sought various services. In particular, 7 percent of men took an HIV test, and of those 9 percent tested positive (Abstract 1507).

***About the Conference***

The 2004 National STD Prevention Conference is the leading U.S. conference focusing on sexually transmitted diseases. The conference presents the latest data on national and local STD trends and highlight new STD prevention strategies, research and treatment options. Participants include more than 1000 delegates from academia, public health, nongovernmental and policy organizations.

This year's conference is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American STD Association (ASTDA), the National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSDD) and the American Social Health Association (ASHA). For more information, visit [www.stdconference.org](http://www.stdconference.org).

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