

January 2016

RE: Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) packets for sexually transmitted infection (STI)
STI treatment reminders

Dear Grant County Healthcare Partner:

The Washington State Department of Health and the Grant County Health District want to update you on the Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) packets and on STD /STI treatment.

Because of the ongoing gonorrhea outbreak and high syphilis rates in Grant County, it continues to be essential to correctly diagnose, treat and **timely report STDs /STIs**. In addition, we encourage **all providers who identify patients with STDs to also test for HIV**.

In 2015 in Washington State there were 28,557 cases of *Chlamydia trachomatis* (Chlamydia) reported, 7,181 cases of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (Gonorrhea) reported and 1,079 cases of *Treponema pallidum* (Syphilis) reported.

Grant County STI cases through December 2015:

- Chlamydia 382 (393 in 2014);
- Gonorrhea 117 (80 in 2014);
- Syphilis 18 (12 in 2014).

Providers should continue to screen at least annually all sexually active adolescent females and women under 25 years of age, women with multiple partners, men who have sex with men (MSM), and other risk groups, even if symptoms are not present. Consult screening recommendations on the CDC website for more information: www.cdc.gov/std/prevention/screeningrecs.htm.

Dual (two-antibiotic) treatment of gonorrhea infection is necessary, regardless of the presence or absence of chlamydial co-infection. **The recommended treatment of a gonorrhea case is ceftriaxone AND azithromycin. CDC treatment guidelines do not recommend a single-drug treatment of gonorrhea.**

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) for all sex partners of diagnosed individuals is critical to control these infections. Sex partners of **heterosexual patients** who test positive for chlamydia or gonorrhea should be offered free medication and treated for infections to which they were exposed. Currently EPT is **not used for males who have sex with other men**.

There are two types of EPT packets: one for chlamydia and one for gonorrhea. The packets include: Azithromycin 1g (chlamydia packet), **OR** Azithromycin AND Cefixime 400mg (gonorrhea packets only), allergy warning (English and Spanish), condoms and information on gonorrhea and/or chlamydia. The EPT packets provided by DOH STD Services are available in pharmacies throughout the state. GCHD would like to partner with you to make EPT packets available.

To request EPT packets for your ER, urgent care, clinic, and pharmacy, contact the GCHD at 509-766-7960. You may also refer patients to GCHD for treatment.

Below are several other resources for your perusal:

- A *STD Fast Facts* sheet which includes maps, graphs and charts showing chlamydia and gonorrhea case counts and rates by county of STDs reported in 2014;
www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/347-350-FastFacts2014.pdf
- A laminated Washington State Department of Health STD treatment guidelines (based on CDC 2015 guidelines). Summary and downloads of the full CDC version are available on the STD Services website:
www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/SexuallyTransmittedDisease/ClinicalGuidelines.aspx
- The faxable case report found on the web site:
www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/SexuallyTransmittedDisease/CaseReports.aspx. This form includes a prescription order form for pharmacies in your community that participate in the Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) Project.

Requests for additional copies of any of these materials can be made by calling the Washington State Department of Health at 360-236-3460. **Thank you again for partnering with public health on controlling sexually transmitted infections in our communities.**

Sincerely,

Alexander L. Brzezny, MD, MPH, FAAFP