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FROM:

**STD and Hepatitis Prevention Program
Public Health Services
Health and Human Services Agency
County of San Diego**

Contents--STDHEP Update #10

Inappropriate Use of Bicillin C-R for Treatment of Syphilis

Guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend benzathine penicillin G (Bicillin L-A) 2.4 MU administered as a single IM injection for treatment of primary, secondary, or early latent syphilis. Patients diagnosed with late latent syphilis or syphilis of unknown duration should receive three weekly injections of benzathine penicillin G (Bicillin L-A) 2.4 MU.

Recently, a provider in Los Angeles County reported that some patients at their facilities mistakenly received Bicillin C-R (Controlled-Release) as treatment for syphilis. The C-R formulation is a mixture of benzathine and procaine penicillins. It contains half the benzathine content per dose and does not provide the same duration of protection compared to Bicillin L-A (Long-Acting). Bicillin C-R is not recommended for treatment of syphilis.

The packaging of the two formulations is similar and can be easily confused. The use of the non-recommended formulation of Bicillin C-R has happened before, in other jurisdictions.

We remind providers to avoid use of Bicillin C-R to treat patients for syphilis. Use the recommended formulation of Bicillin L-A (Long-Acting).

Complete STD treatment guidelines can be found the CDC web page:
www.cdc.gov/std/treatment

Syphilis cases should be reported to the Field and Community Services section of the County of San Diego STD and Hepatitis Prevention Program, (619-692-8520).

County of San Diego STD and Hepatitis Prevention Program Services

STD clinic services, which include a dark-field examination of any suspect primary syphilis lesion, complete STD screening, and selective risk-based Hepatitis vaccination, are available 5 days a week on a walk-in basis. Call 619-692-8550 for times and locations. Field and Community Services staff members are available to assist in any way, including transportation of clients to the clinic. Please call 619-692-8501 for assistance.