



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS ADVISORY

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SYPHILIS CASES INCREASE NEARLY 200 PERCENT IN FIVE YEARS *County Health Officials Launch Campaign Urging Public to Get Tested*

WHAT: San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) officials will inform the general public of an increase in syphilis cases and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), urge people to protect themselves, and recommend that residents get tested for STDs.

HHSA and its HIV, STD and Hepatitis Branch will also launch radio and television public service announcements urging people to get tested for STDs. The spots will complement existing STD prevention efforts taking place throughout the County.

WHO: **Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H.**, County of San Diego Public Health Officer
Terry Cunningham, Chief, HHSA's HIV, STD and Hepatitis Branch
Bob Lewis, Family Health Centers of San Diego

WHEN: **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2008 AT 12:30 P.M.**

WHERE: **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**
3851 ROSECRANS STREET

WHY: The number of Syphilis cases in San Diego County jumped from 109 in 2003 to 312 in 2007, a nearly 200 percent increase.

Chlamydia cases also increased 25 percent in the past five years from 10,249 cases in 2003 to about 12,796 cases in 2007.

There were 1,972 cases of Gonorrhea in 2003 and about 2,403 in 2007, a 22 percent increase.

A possible explanation for the increase in Gonorrhea, Chlamydia, and Syphilis cases could be that patients are not forthcoming about their sexual practices, making it difficult for their health providers to order appropriate tests and to stop the spread of these sexually transmitted diseases.

STDs can lead to a higher risk of becoming infected with HIV, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

VISUALS: Paper doll demonstration on how STDs can easily spread, charts showing rise in STDs, and radio and television public service announcements.

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