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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 #11
Resistant Gonorrhea Continues to Spread in the US**

Attachments

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Resistant Gonorrhea continues to spread in the US

Gonorrhea (GC) resistant to fluoroquinolones (ciprofloxacin, ofloxacin, levofloxacin) has continued to spread throughout the United States, **primarily among men who have sex with men (MSM)**. These resistant strains were introduced into Hawaii 4-5 years ago from the Far East and entered California in 2001. Resistance prevalence has continued to increase among both MSM and heterosexual populations, which led California to **officially recommend in June 2003 that fluoroquinolones no longer be used to treat persons with gonorrhea in California**. The new national recommendation states that fluoroquinolones no longer be used to treat gonorrhea among MSM and acknowledges that in some areas, such as California and Hawaii, **these antibiotics should not be used at all to treat gonorrhea**.

Recommended Treatment with Cephalosporin Antibiotics

- **Ceftriaxone (Rocephin)** 125mg IM is highly effective for all sites of infection.
- **Cefixime (Suprax)** 400mg orally in a single dose is effective, but no longer available in the United States. However, it may become available through a different manufacturer within the next 6 months.
- **Cefpodoxime (Vantin)** 400mg orally in a single dose is an FDA-approved treatment for GC. **This regimen is used in the County of San Diego STD Clinics** and in other counties. Some experts use the FDA-approved 200mg dose of cefpodoxime to treat uncomplicated urogenital infections. Cefpodoxime is not listed in the CDC Treatment Guidelines as an alternative treatment because efficacy studies involved only a small sample size and, although the regimen was considered effective (97% efficacy), the confidence interval was just below the CDC cutoff of 95% (small sample size). Larger studies are being initiated.

California Gonorrhea Treatment Guidelines

For a complete listing of alternative regimens, including for persons allergic to Penicillin/Cephalosporins, see the The California Gonorrhea Treatment Guidelines revised June 25, 2003, which are available at http://www.stdhivtraining.org/pdf/2003_CA_GC_Rx_guides.pdf. A copy of the guidelines is attached.