

HALTON REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT • Office of the Medical Officer of Health

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TO: Halton Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Emergency Departments, Midwives

FROM: Dr. Joanna Oda, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: February 4, 2021

RE: Changes to Public Health Management of STIs

QUICK FACTS

- Halton Region Public Health is asking for your support in completing treatment, partner notification and discussion of the “Key messages for patients” listed below for chlamydia (CT), gonorrhea (GC), syphilis and HIV, for patients tested in your office.
- Many Public Health staff have been redeployed to the COVID-19 response requiring temporary changes to usual STI case and contact management.
- STI rates continue to increase; there were 1,234 reportable STIs in Halton in 2020, including a significant increase in syphilis cases, similar to trends being seen across Ontario.
- If you are able to offer Bicillin treatment or would like to order publicly funded STI medication please visit [Halton’s Sexual Health Information page for Physicians](#) or call 311.

KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- Public Health will continue to initiate and complete case management for:
 - Patients with reactive HIV (new infection)
 - Patients with reactive syphilis/unknown history
 - Female patients of child bearing age or pregnant, any STI
 - Patients 18 years of age and younger, any STI
- Public Health will temporarily suspend the following steps when the Healthcare Provider has completed the testing, treatment and all follow up with the patient:
 - Follow up if the patient had a previous CT/GC in last year
 - Follow up with patients with CT/GC or Syphilis if co-infected with HIV and under care of ID Specialist
 - Confirmation of post-treatment syphilis serology
 - Follow up with partners of patients who are pregnant

KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- If you have unprotected sex with new partners, even if you do not have symptoms, get tested for STIs
- Abstain from sex for 7 days after completion of STI treatment and inform sex partners of infection
- Use condoms or dental dams to prevent the spread of STIs
- Complete recommended post treatment serology for Syphilis to confirm treatment success

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [PHO: Ontario Gonorrhea Testing and Treatment Guide, 2nd Edition \(2018\)](#)
- [Government of Canada: Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections](#)

Please report all suspected/confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) (including positive TB skin test results) to Public Health immediately by calling 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866.

PLEASE POST IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND PHYSICIAN LOUNGES

IF YOU CAN'T ACCESS HYPERLINKS, PLEASE SIGN UP FOR ELECTRONIC UPDATES BY EMAILING DOCTORS@HALTON.CA