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PRESS RELEASE

September 28, 2017

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SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES ON THE RISE

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – Santa Barbara County, the state of California and the entire country are experiencing increases in sexually transmitted diseases (STD) including gonorrhea, syphilis and chlamydia. Since many individuals do not display symptoms and may not know they are infected, we recommend that all adults discuss this with their healthcare providers and obtain routine annual screening for STD's to protect their health.

In Santa Barbara County, we have seen alarming increases in sexually transmitted diseases since 2011:

- Gonorrhea: 212.9% increase (from 101 cases in 2011 to 316 cases in 2016)
- Syphilis: 400% increase (from 5 cases in 2011 to 25 cases in 2016)
- Chlamydia: 29.2% increase (from 1775 cases in 2011 to 2294 cases in 2016)

Public Health promotes using protection during sexual activity to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. Our communities need to continue to hear that message year after year, as new individuals become sexually active.

The 2016 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Sexually Transmitted Disease Surveillance Report marks the third year of overall increasing rates for chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis nationally. Untreated, these conditions can have severe health impacts. With timely treatment, transmission is stopped and health is protected. In this way, treating STDs in individuals helps protect our entire community. STD prevention is a priority to safeguard quality of life for thousands of citizens.