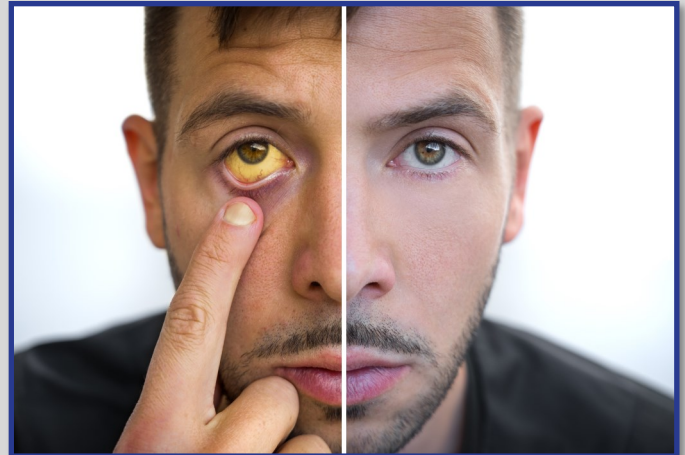


Reproductive Health Education (RH Ed) is an educational newsletter from the Health Advocates at Finger Lakes Community Health. This newsletter covers all reproductive health topics, in addition to related services offered at our health centers.

Hepatitis. What you need to know!

Hepatitis is a common illness, yet many people know very little about it. There is more than one strain of Hepatitis, and they are labeled by alphabet letters: A, B, C, D, and E. Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver most commonly caused by a virus. The most common types of viral hepatitis in the US are A, B, and C. Although symptoms for each type are similar, each type of hepatitis has a different route of transmission, affects the liver differently, and even affects different populations. There are vaccines for hepatitis A and B, and although there are no vaccines available for hepatitis C, there are treatments that can cure the virus. Symptoms of hepatitis include yellow skins or eyes (jaundice), nausea, abdominal pain, fatigue, and fever, and some people may not experience any symptoms at all. According to the CDC and their research, there was a large increase in hepatitis A cases during 2019. It was found that the ongoing widespread outbreaks were driven by person-to-person transmission, mostly in homeless populations and drug user populations. You can reduce your risk of contracting Hepatitis through proper hand hygiene, getting tested by your medical provider, and using barrier

methods such as condoms or dental dams during sexual activity. An increase in injection drug use also increased the new cases of hepatitis C virus infections in the US. **To find out more, visit** <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/index.htm>



Breastfeeding has been shown to have a variety of health benefits for both mother and baby. For mothers, benefits from breastfeeding include: lowered risk for high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, ovarian cancer, and breast cancer. For infants, breastfeeding is shown to lower the risk for obesity, asthma, Type 1 Diabetes, reduce likelihood of ear infections, and more. In the United States, one in four infants is exclusively breastfed (no formula used), as recommended by the CDC. New mothers are also recommended to breastfeed up to six months to see the benefits listed above. Unfortunately, the CDC's 2020 data shows that 60% of mothers stop sooner than planned due barriers such as lack of support, difficulty with breastfeeding, education, and policies that may determine whether an infant is breastfed or how long they are breastfed.

With the health benefits of breastfeeding, Finger

Lakes Community Health supports it as the preferred feeding option for babies. All of our health centers are certified as "breastfeeding friendly" through the NY State Department of Health; meaning we encourage breastfeeding in every one of our health centers! Our health educators also work with new and expecting moms to help set them up for breastfeeding success! We can help mothers get access to breast pumps, local lactation support, and more. We know that breastfeeding is not for everyone, so we also help with formula should our patients choose that option. In addition, we provide education for parents as well as community partners, and we help to identify and eliminate barriers for breastfeeding mothers. If you have any questions or need assistance regarding breastfeeding - we can help! Just call one of our community health centers (listed on the back of this newsletter) and ask to speak with one of our health educators!

Locations:

Bath

Community Health

117 E. Steuben St
Bath, NY 14810
(607) 776-3063

Geneva

Community Health

601B Washington St
Geneva, NY 14456
(315) 781-8448

Newark

Community Health

513 W. Union St
Newark, NY 14513
(315) 573-7577

Ovid

Community Health

7150 N. Main Street
Ovid, NY 14521
(607) 403-0065

Penn Yan

Community Health

112 Kimball Ave
Penn Yan, NY 14527
(315) 536-2752

Port Byron

Community Health

60 Main St
Port Byron, NY 13140
(315) 776-9700

Sodus

Community Health

6341 Ridge Rodd
Sodus, NY 14551
(315) 483-1199

Call the FLCH office
nearest you for all
your medical, dental,
reproductive and
behavioral health needs.

For more details visit:

www.LocalCommunityHealth.com

Provider Spotlight!

HIV Prevention is KEY to Ending the Epidemic

By Estella Garcia, RN



Estella Garcia, RN, Finger Lakes Community Health

“1.2 million people currently live in the United States with HIV. HIV can be prevented by using barrier methods like condoms during sexual activity, not sharing needles or personal items with others, and using pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). PrEP medications have changed rapidly since their development. Over the last 18 months, generic PrEP has come out and new modalities for PrEP dispensing are being developed. Truvada was approved by the FDA in 2012, and Descovy was approved in 2019. Descovy has limited approval for gay men, bisexuals, men who have sex with men, and transgender women. In October 2020 generic HIV treatment was introduced to the market with FDA approval. These medications can be taken daily as a medication or through a method known as “on-demand” use. We work with patients to find a method method that works best for their lifestyle needs. The introduction of generic PrEP has helped to reduce cost,

Early HIV symptoms may mirror a bad case of the flu or even Covid-19. Symptoms usually occur a few weeks after infection and can often be overlooked. HIV symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, swollen lymph glands, rash, sore joints, muscle aches, or even a sore throat. The symptoms typically linger for 1 to 4 weeks, making them easy to be mistaken for another illness. HIV can be transmitted via sexual activity, drug use, breastfeeding, or when you come into contact with certain fluids like blood, semen, anal and vaginal fluids. As a nation, we have been ramping up efforts for years to address the HIV epidemic. To have successful HIV outcomes, communities need consistent access to medication and care. Access to and harnessing preventive benefits of HIV treatment adherence is also key to those successful outcomes. COVID-19 caused many issues for those living with HIV. Options for medical care were reduced, social distancing guidelines were put in place, and fears about COVID-19 exposure increased. This threatened access to HIV prevention services and care, and with attention focused on COVID-19, it put a damper on national efforts to address HIV. Understanding how COVID-19 and HIV interplay with one another is critical to the health of people who have or are at risk for HIV and key to curbing both issues. We continue to provide HIV care through the use of telehealth and never closed our doors to patients during the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic. We test our patients yearly for HIV or more often if needed; often covering the cost of the test to eliminate cost as a barrier to testing. We offer PrEP for our patients and free safe sex materials like internal & external condoms and dental dams. Don't delay taking care of yourself, chat with your provider at your next health center visit about what you can do to prevent HIV.”

Would you like us to visit your program or school to provide evidence based programming on pregnancy prevention, STI prevention, healthy relationships and more?

For more information visit, www.LocalCommunityHealth.com or

call us today to schedule at (315) 787-8132.

Follow us on TWITTER at **FLCHFPED!**