



# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

## Press Release

**For Release: Immediately**

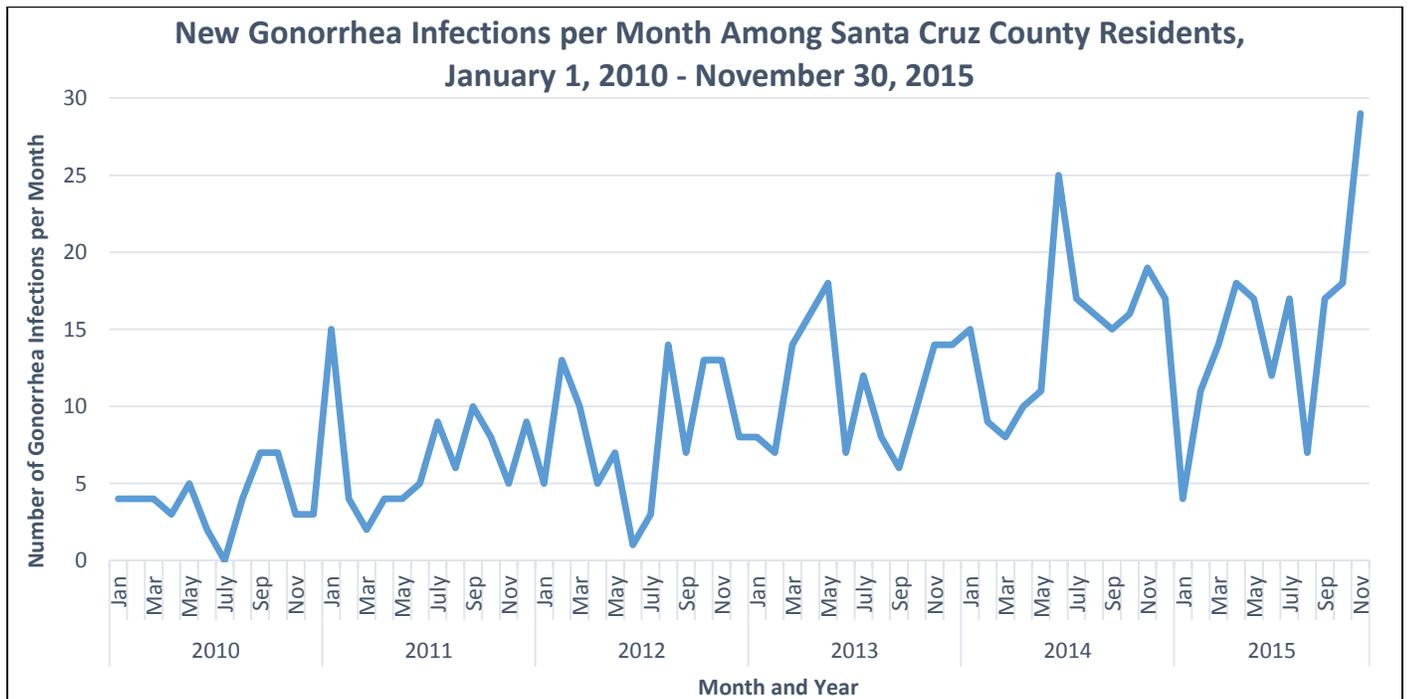
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### PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY INCREASE IN GONORRHEA INFECTIONS

- Cases of gonorrhea have nearly quadrupled among Santa Cruz County residents, increasing from 46 cases in 2010 to 178 cases in 2014.<sup>1</sup>
- November 2015 was the highest month on record since 2010 with 29 cases, nearly twice the monthly average of 15 cases between January and October of 2015.
- The increase is among all genders, ages and ethnicities. The greatest increase over the past few months has been among men ages 18-35 who are having sex with men.



## **INFORMATION** <sup>2</sup>

- Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease (STD). You can get gonorrhea by having vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has gonorrhea. It can infect the genitals, rectum, and throat so testing should be done for all exposed locations.

- Men may have no symptoms, but those who do have symptoms may have a burning sensation when urinating, discharge from the penis, or painful or swollen testicles.
- The majority of women do not have any symptoms. Even with symptoms, they are often mild and can be mistaken other infections. Symptoms in women can include: pain or burning while urinating, increased vaginal discharge, or vaginal bleeding or spotting between periods.
- Anyone with genital symptoms such as discharge, burning during urination, unusual sores, or rash should stop having sex and see a health care provider immediately.
- Gonorrhea can be cured with the correct treatment using antibiotics.
- Untreated gonorrhea can cause serious and permanent health problems in both women and men.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS** <sup>2</sup>

- **Use a condom.** Correct and consistent use of condoms is highly effective in reducing STDs. Use a condom every time you have anal or vaginal sex.
- **Reduce number of sex partners.** Reducing your number of sex partners can decrease your risk for STDs. It is important that you and your partner get tested, and that you share your test results with one another.
- **Get yourself tested.** Women under 25 and men who have sex with men should be tested every year in all exposed locations (genital, rectal and pharyngeal). All persons with a recent history of STDs, multiple or anonymous partners, or exchanging sex for drugs or money should get tested every 3-6 months.

SOURCES: (1) County of Santa Cruz, Public Health, Communicable Disease Unit (unpublished data)  
 (2) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Gonorrhea [www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea](http://www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea)

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.



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 Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Santa Cruz County**