

William J. Streur
Commissioner
P.O. Box 110601
Juneau, AK 99811-0601
www.hss.state.ak.us



Press Release

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Contact: Greg Wilkinson, (907) 269-7285, Cell (907) 382-7032
gregory.wilkinson@alaska.gov
Ann Potempa, (907) 269-7957, Cell (907) 230-4001
ann.potempa@alaska.gov

Decline in gonorrhea cases reported in 2011

Numbers down among all racial groups

ANCHORAGE — According to information just released by the State of Alaska Section of Epidemiology, there has been a 23 percent decrease in the number of gonorrhea infections reported during the first three quarters of 2011 compared to the first three quarters of 2010.

There were 770 laboratory confirmed cases of gonorrhea in the first three quarters of 2011, compared to 1,005 in 2010.

The reduction occurred among all racial groups, with the most sizeable decreases occurring among white and Alaska Native populations. Reductions were seen statewide, with the exception of the Interior.

According to the report, the decrease in cases may have been influenced by a couple different factors. First, through increased awareness of the gonorrhea/Chlamydia epidemic among health care providers and the general public. And second, through increased emphasis on notifying sexual partners — including the use of *expedited partner therapy*, where sexual partners can receive treatment without going to a provider.

“While the numbers are encouraging, Alaska still has one of the highest rates in the country,” said Susan Jones, the HIV/ STD Program Manager. “Health care providers and the general public need to remain vigilant about controlling the spread of sexually transmitted disease. Tests are simple and quick and the treatment is easy. I’m pleased to see this decline, but we’re not out of the woods yet.”

A complete copy of the Epidemiology Bulletin is available at:
http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/b2011_30.pdf

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