



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Planned Parenthood Teams Up With Public Health and Champaign County Health Care Consumers on November 5

Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois to Distribute Free Emergency Contraception; Public Health to Offer Risk-Reduction Counseling and Tests for Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Public Health will join Planned Parenthood and the Champaign County Health Care Consumers on Saturday, November 5, to offer vital health services to women. At the event, called "The Great EC Giveaway," doctors and nurse practitioners with Planned Parenthood will offer women free supplies of Emergency Contraception (EC). Public Health staff will provide skills-based risk reduction education about sexually transmitted diseases, and will offer information, condoms and on-site tests for chlamydia and gonorrhea.

The event, sponsored by Planned Parenthood, the Illinois Department of Human Services, and the Champaign County Health Care Consumers, will be held from 1-3 p.m. on Saturday, November 5 at the Illinois Disciples Foundation, 610 E. Springfield, Champaign.

If taken soon after unprotected vaginal intercourse, Emergency Contraception prevents pregnancy by stopping ovulation, fertilization or implantation. It will not cause an abortion.

Emergency Contraception is most efficient when taken immediately after sexual intercourse. It may be taken up to 120 hours after unprotected intercourse but has a reduced efficiency as time passes. It does not protect against sexually transmitted infections. Emergency contraception can be used when a condom breaks, after a sexual assault, or any time unprotected vaginal intercourse occurs.

In addition to providing Emergency Contraception, health providers will offer risk reduction counseling and tests for chlamydia and gonorrhea - two sexually transmitted diseases that can endanger a woman's health and fertility.

Chlamydia and gonorrhea rates in Champaign County are higher than in the state as a whole, and rival those of counties with the highest rates in the state.

In 2004 Champaign County reported a chlamydia incidence rate of 669.0 cases per 100,000 population, as compared to 379.0 per 100,000 for the state of Illinois. Only three counties in the state (Alexander, Peoria and Pope) had higher chlamydia incidence rates last year.

In 2004 Champaign County saw a gonorrhea incidence rate of 260.5 per 100,000, which is higher than the state rate (165.8 per 100,000) and is the sixth highest rate in the non-urban counties of Illinois.

Chlamydia and gonorrhea are sexually transmitted infections caused by bacteria, and each can be treated with antibiotics. Untreated chlamydia infection can lead to infertility in women. Untreated gonorrhea can cause pelvic inflammatory disease, which leads to tubal (ectopic) pregnancy and infertility in up to 10 percent of infected women.

The Emergency Contraception is free. Public Health services will be offered free of charge. Donations will be accepted by both providers.

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