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Dear Colleague:

You can help reduce the impact of *Chlamydia trachomatis* (chlamydia) infections in our communities by detecting and treating infections in asymptomatic individuals – without the need for pelvic examinations in women or urethral swabs in men.

**Undetected chlamydia infections are very common and very serious.** In Wisconsin, 40% of all reported chlamydia infections are among 15-19 year old women. At the two largest public health laboratories in Wisconsin the test positivity rate among all men tested in 2004 (~21,000) was 14%; the rate among all women tested in 2004 (~43,000) was 7%.

Chlamydia infection is present in about 3% of the general population aged 18-35, and up to 6% of adolescents.1,2 About 75-85% of the infected women and at least 40% of infected men have no symptoms. If untreated, 20% to 40% of women with chlamydia infection will develop PID5, 60% of whom may also be asymptomatic3, 4. Moreover, chlamydial PID frequently results in infertility due to tubal scarring (20%), chronic pelvic pain (18%), and ectopic pregnancy (9%).6

A new generation of nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs) makes it possible to screen men and women for chlamydia infection using a convenient urine specimen. These tests are now available through nearly all clinical laboratories in Wisconsin and are covered by most major health care insurers.

We urge you to consider routine testing for chlamydia infection as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in these patient populations:

- All sexually active women aged 25 years and younger at least annually
- Women with a new sex partner, more than one sex partner, or a history of a recent sexually transmitted disease, regardless of age
- Women recently infected with chlamydia, 3-4 months after treatment
- All pregnant women

A recent study demonstrated that screening young at-risk women led to a 56% decrease in PID when compared with a control group of women who received routine care7. Other data from several regions of the country support aggressive screening for and treatment of chlamydia infections as well. **We need your help to achieve similar success in our communities!** Implementing a screening strategy in your clinic may be as simple as collecting specimens for chlamydia testing at the time of routine Pap testing on all females 25 years or younger by placing chlamydia swabs or urine test kits next to Pap test collection materials8 (chlamydia screening and treatment recommendations and an article reprint are enclosed).

For more information on chlamydia screening and treatment recommendations, types of tests for detection and the various resources on chlamydia available to providers, please contact your laboratory service or the

**Wisconsin.gov**
Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (Bobbie McDonald 608-262 -6505) or the Wisconsin Division of Public Health STD Program (Lori Amsterdam 608-267- 5220).

Sincerely,

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References:


