

# Discuss sexual health with all patients

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

Some patients may not be comfortable talking about their sexual practices. It is critical to put them at ease by informing them that this is a routine conversation you have with all patients as part of their medical exam and anything they say will remain confidential.

### SEXUAL HISTORY CONVERSATION TIPS:

- Emphasize this is routine for all patients
- Ensure confidentiality
- Be non-judgmental (verbal and non-verbal)
- Make it conversational (ask open-ended questions)

“*To provide you with the best service I can, I ask all of my patients about their history. I'd like to ask you some questions regarding your sex life. I recognize this is a sensitive topic, but know that this information will be between us.*”

All cases of syphilis must be reported within one working day to the Department of Public Health. (California Health and Safety Code 120675-120715)



For syphilis history, staging or reporting:  
County of San Diego Community  
Health Services Unit: 619-692-8501



For STD clinical management consultation:  
County of San Diego STD Clinical  
Consultation Line: 619-609-3245



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### WHO

- Number of partners in the past
- Gender
- Steady and/or casual partners
- Partners' risk factors (multiple sex partners, incarcerated, HIV+)

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- *Who are your sexual partners (male, female, transgender)?*
- *How many sexual partners have you had in the past year?*
- *Do you suspect your partner(s) have other partners besides you?*

### WHAT

- Methods to protect yourself from STDs/HIV
- Methods to prevent pregnancy
- Previous history of STDs

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- *What ways do you try to protect yourself from STDs?*
- *What STDs have you or your partners had in the past?*
- *Would you like to become pregnant in the next year?*

### HOW

- Types of sex (vaginal, oral, anal)
- Sex while under the influence of drugs and alcohol

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- *How do you have sex? Vaginal? Oral? Anal?*
- *How often do you mix alcohol or drugs with sex?*