

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)

Provider Toolkit



Delivering the Next
Generation
of Health Care

Disclaimer

The content presented within this training is for informational purposes only and not intended as medical advice or to direct treatment. Physicians and other health care providers are solely responsible for the treatment decisions for their patients and should not use the information presented and accompanying materials to substitute independent clinical judgment.

Contents

Introduction

STIs

- Definition
- Chlamydia
- Testing
- Treatment

HIV Screening

- Facts
- Screening Recommendations

STI Screening in Pregnancy

- HIV/Testing Codes
- Syphilis/Testing Codes
- Perinatal Quality Enhancement Program

Promoting Sexual Health

References



Introduction

Dear Provider,

Thank you for your participation with the AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana provider network.

This toolkit creates a guide to assist you and your office staff in providing STI testing to our members, your patients.

Your review and understanding of this toolkit are essential, and we encourage you to contact our Quality Team with any questions, concerns, and/or suggestions regarding the STI Screening—Provider Toolkit.

Important Links:

- [AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Provider Alert](#) (Posted April 12, 2023)
- [AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Provider Post](#) (Posted Winter 2023)
- [AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Clinical Practice Guidelines](#)

About AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana



Who we are:

AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana is part of the AmeriHealth Caritas Family of Companies, a national leader in managed care. AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana provides Louisiana Medicaid recipients access to quality health care. Headquartered in Baton Rouge, AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana is a mission-driven health care organization whose goal is to improve health outcomes for our members and build healthy communities across Louisiana.

Our values:

Our service is built on advocacy, dignity, diversity, care for those who are poor, compassion, hospitality, and stewardship.

Our mission:

We help people get care, stay well, and build healthy communities.

STIs: What are they?

Sexually Transmitted Infections are spread mainly through unprotected sexual contact. Some may be transmitted during pregnancy and childbirth or via infected blood or blood products.

If left untreated, STIs can lead to severe consequences, such as infertility, stillbirths, neurological and cardiovascular disease, and increased risk of acquiring Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

Many STIs do not have any symptoms. If symptoms are present, they usually appear as vaginal or urethral discharge, genital ulcer, or lower abdominal pain.

The most common and curable STIs are chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and trichomonas.

Viral STIs such as HIV, Herpes simplex, Hepatitis B and Human papillomavirus (HPV) have few treatment options.

STIs are very common. Many are curable, and all are preventable.

Most Common STIs

Chlamydia

Gonorrhea

Syphilis

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

Genital Herpes

Bacterial Vaginosis (BV)

Trichomoniasis

Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)

Hepatitis B

Chlamydia

The *most commonly reported* STI in the US is Chlamydia.

Louisiana has one of the highest rates of Chlamydia. There were 36,200 cases, with a rate of 789 cases per 100,000 people, in 2022.

AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana REL data for 2023 shows a disparity in the screening of White members, with a rate of 54.27%, as compared to the screening rate in Black members, which was 67.56%.

Most infections occur in people under 25.

If left untreated, Chlamydia can cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID), ectopic pregnancy, infertility, and increased cancer risk.

Screening is crucial, as nearly 75% of Chlamydia infections in women and 95% of infections in men are asymptomatic.

STI Testing: CDC Guidelines

Who should get tested:

- ❑ Everyone ages 13-64 should be tested at least once for HIV.
- ❑ All sexually active women under 25 should be tested yearly for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia; women over 25 who have multiple sex partners or a sex partner with an STI should be tested yearly, as well.
- ❑ Every pregnant person should be tested as follows:
 - HIV, Syphilis, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C in the 1st trimester
 - Retested for HIV in the 3rd trimester *and* at delivery if no record of testing is on file
 - Retested for Syphilis by the 32nd week of pregnancy to have adequate time to treat before delivery
- ❑ All sexually active gay/bisexual/other men who have sex with men should be tested as follows:
 - Yearly for HIV, Syphilis, Chlamydia, and Gonorrhea; more frequently if a person has multiple sex partners
 - Yearly for Hepatitis C, if living with HIV
- ❑ All persons who share injection drug equipment should be tested yearly for HIV.
- ❑ All persons who have had oral or anal sex should be offered throat and rectal testing.

STI Treatment

Please refer to the following link to
the CDC Sexually Transmitted
Infections Treatment Guidelines,
2021:

<https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/toc.htm>

HIV: Facts

HIV, or Human Immunodeficiency Virus, is a virus that attacks cells in the body that help fight infection. It can make a person more vulnerable to disease.

HIV has no cure and, if left untreated, can lead to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). The HIV will continue to replicate in the body and can result in several complications, including dementia, viral/fungal/parasitic infections, neuropathy, and lymphomas.

1 in 8 people do not know they are infected with HIV and may be asymptomatic.

In 2022, there were 858 new HIV cases diagnosed in Louisiana.

As of December 2023, there were 22,978 persons living with HIV in Louisiana.

The **only** way for someone to know they have HIV is to get tested.

HIV Screening

The CDC recommends all patients ages 13-64 be screened for HIV as part of routine health care.

Benefits of routine screening.



HIV is a serious health disorder that can be detected before symptoms develop.



HIV is detectable by reliable, inexpensive, acceptable screening tests.



People diagnosed with HIV have years of life to gain if treatment is started early, before symptoms develop.



Screening costs are reasonable in relation to proven benefits.

CDC HIV Screening Recommendations



1. Offer HIV screening to all patients.

HIV can affect every gender, sexual orientation, age, and ethnicity.

Diagnosing HIV quickly and linking patients to care is vital in reducing new HIV infections.



2. Start the conversation with your patients.

Offering HIV screening to all creates opportunities to discuss sexual health, risk factors, and overall health.

Conduct an HIV risk assessment for all sexually active patients to assess the need for routine screenings and prevention counseling.



3. Offer “Opt-out” testing.

Inform your patients that an HIV test will be included in the standard preventative screening tests and that they can decline the test.

“Opt-out” screening has been proven very effective, as it helps to remove HIV stigma, promotes earlier diagnosis and linkage to care, decreases the risk of transmission, and is cost-effective.

HIV Screening in Pregnancy

HIV can also be transferred from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding.

It is extremely important for women of child-bearing age and pregnant women to receive HIV testing. If a mother with HIV receives appropriate antiretroviral treatment during pregnancy, labor & delivery, does not breastfeed and completes a treatment course for the newborn, there is a less than 1% chance the virus will be transmitted to her child.

Approximately 150-160 women living with HIV in Louisiana give birth each year. Black women have a higher rate of HIV infection as compared to other races.

Louisiana Act 459 (RS 40:1121.21) requires providers to offer “opt-out” HIV and Syphilis screening to women during 3rd trimester of pregnancy, in addition to testing at first prenatal visit.



HIV Screening Codes

HIV Screening is a *Performance Improvement Project (PIP)* with LDH through 2025.

HIV Test Procedure Codes (Source: NASTAD, 2016)
86689 HTLV or HIV antibody, confirmatory test (e.g., Western Blot)
HIV CPT Code
80081, Organ or Disease Oriented Panels/Prenatal Panel
Antibody
86701 HIV-1 86702 HIV-2 86703 HIV-1 and HIV-2, single result (For HIV-1 antigen(s) with HIV-1 and HIV-2 antibodies, single result, use 87389) (When HIV immunoassay [HIV testing 86701-86703 or 87389] is performed using a kit or transportable instrument that wholly or in part consists of a single use, disposable analytical chamber, the service may be identified by adding modifier 92 to the usual code)
Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA)
87534 HIV-1, direct probe technique 87535 HIV-1, amplified probe technique, includes reverse transcription when performed 87536 HIV-1, quantification, includes reverse transcription when performed 87357 HIV-2, direct probe technique 87538 HIV-2, amplified probe technique, includes reverse transcription when performed 87539 HIV-2, quantification, includes reverse transcription when performed
Infectious agent antigen detection by immunoassay technique, (e.g., enzyme immunoassay [EIA], enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay [ELISA], immunochemiluminometric assay [IMCA]) qualitative or semiquantitative, multiple-step method
87389 HIV-1 antigen(s), with HIV-1 and HIV-2 antibodies, single result 87390 HIV-1 87391 HIV-2
HIV Screening Encounter ICD-10 Diagnosis Codes
Z11.4 Encounter for screening for human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] HIV screening

Syphilis Screening in Pregnancy

Congenital Syphilis (CS) happens when syphilis is passed to the baby during pregnancy.

Louisiana had the 3rd highest case rate of CS in the US, with 110 in 2021. This was a 75% increase from 2020.

Louisiana **requires** Syphilis testing in the **1st trimester and beginning of 3rd trimester**; testing can be done at delivery if a pregnant person is at an increased risk.

Untreated Syphilis during pregnancy can cause stillbirth, neonatal death, bone deformities, and neurologic impairment.

If a pregnant person is positive for Syphilis, the CDC recommends parenteral Penicillin G benzathine as the treatment.

Syphilis Screening Codes

Pregnancy codes:

- 80055 Prenatal Panel
- 80081 Prenatal Panel with HIV

Additional testing codes:

- 86592 Syphilis test, non-treponemal antibody; qualitative (eg, VDRL, RPR, ART)
- 86593 Syphilis test, non-treponemal antibody; quantitative
- 86780 Antibody; Treponema pallidum
- 87285 Infectious agent antigen detection by immunofluorescent technique; Treponema pallidum
- 87164 Dark field examination, any source (eg, penile, vaginal, oral, skin); includes specimen collection
- 87166 Dark field examination, any source (eg, penile, vaginal, oral, skin); without collection

Addressing Congenital Syphilis through Improved Syphilis Screening for Healthy Louisiana Pregnant Enrollees is a *Performance Improvement Project (PIP)* with LDH for 2024

Perinatal Quality Enhancement Program

- AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana offers an incentive program for participating Obstetric, Midwife, and Family Practice Practitioners who provide timely, high-quality, cost-effective care and comply with requested health data submission.
- One piece of the program is for STI screenings in Pregnancy.
- To learn more about the program, click [here](#).

2. Sexually transmitted infection (STI) screening	
Chlamydia Screening in Women During Pregnancy	<p>Measurement description: The percentage of women ages 16 years and older who delivered a live birth during the measurement period and had at least one test for chlamydia during pregnancy</p> <p>Eligible population (Denominator): Women who delivered a live birth during the measurement period</p> <p>Numerator: The number of women that had at least one test for chlamydia during pregnancy</p> <p>Continuous enrollment: 43 days prior to delivery through 60 days after delivery</p> <p>Anchor date: Date of delivery</p>
Gonorrhea Screening in Women During Pregnancy	<p>Measurement description: The percentage of women who delivered a live birth during the measurement period and had at least one test for gonorrhea during pregnancy</p> <p>Eligible population (Denominator): Women who delivered a live birth during the measurement period</p> <p>Numerator: The number of women that had at least one test for gonorrhea during pregnancy</p> <p>Continuous enrollment: 43 days prior to delivery through 60 days after delivery</p> <p>Anchor date: Date of delivery</p>
Syphilis Screening in Women During Pregnancy	<p>Measurement description: The percentage of women who delivered a live birth during the measurement period and had at least one test for syphilis during pregnancy</p> <p>Eligible population (Denominator): Women who delivered a live birth during the measurement period</p> <p>Numerator: The number of women that had at least one test for syphilis during pregnancy</p> <p>Continuous enrollment: 43 days prior to delivery through 60 days after delivery</p> <p>Anchor date: Date of delivery</p>
HIV Screening in Women During Pregnancy	<p>Measurement description: The percentage of women who delivered a live birth during the measurement period and had at least one test for HIV during pregnancy</p> <p>Eligible population (Denominator): Women who delivered a live birth during the measurement period</p> <p>Numerator: The number of women that had at least one test for HIV during pregnancy</p> <p>Continuous enrollment: 43 days prior to delivery through 60 days after delivery</p> <p>Anchor date: Date of delivery</p>

Promoting Sexual Health

Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being to sexuality. It is not just the absence of disease or dysfunction.

To make discussing sexual health easier, providers should:

- Foster trust in their patients.
- Help ensure patient is comfortable and in a private area before discussing sensitive material.
- Avoid making assumptions-directly ask patient, using open-ended questions.
- Advise patients that you ask sexual health questions/offer STI testing to all your patients as part of routine health care.
- Educate your patients on safe sex, condom use, hepatitis B and HPV vaccines.
- Offer pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to patients who are at higher risk of contracting HIV.

By normalizing this discussion at appointments, providers can empower their patients to take charge of their sexual health.

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