



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

CORPORATE COMMUNICATION SERVICES

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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 9 FEBRUARY 2005

STI/CONDOM WEEK 12-18 FEBRUARY

The Provincial Department of Health in partnership with the Zululand District Health and Men In Partnership Against Aids (MIPPA) will on Saturday, 12 February 2005 host a massive event to create awareness during the STI/Condom Week. This year STI/Condom Week begins on 12 February until 18 February 2005. "Your Sexual Health ...Your Responsibility" is the theme for this year's STI/Condom Week and Saturday's event will coincide with the official launch of MIPPA in Zululand.

The theme focuses on encouraging personal responsibility and is a call to all South Africans to take action against the spread of Sexually Transmitted Infections.

This launch will kick-start a series of MIPPA launches in other districts throughout the province. MIPPA is to play an active role over the STI/Condom Week to help promote the newly packaged male condoms "Choice" within the male population. In South Africa, Sexually Transmitted Infections remain a big problem, even though most of the infections can be cured.

The fear of being stigmatized is one of the many reasons why some people are reluctant to seek medical treatment for Sexually Transmitted Infections.

STI/Condom Week is aimed not only at reducing the spread of STI but also to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS.



This year the Department plans at making the public aware of symptoms, emphasize the importance of seeking treatment and promote the use of condoms.

Details of the Provincial STI/Condom Week are as follows:

DATE: 12 FEBRUARY 2005

**VENUE: BELGRADE, ESIMDLANGENTSHA
PONGOLA**

TIME: 9H00

Signs and Symptoms of STIs

These signs and symptoms usually become clear between 3 and 21 days after having sex without a condom. These are some of the signs and symptoms of STIs:

- ?? Sores on the vagina, penis or anus
- ?? White, yellow or green discharge coming out of the penis or vagina that is often smelly
- ?? Pain in the lower abdomen
- ?? A burning feeling when you pass water
- ?? Itching and / or redness around the vagina or penis
- ?? Painful sexual intercourse
- ?? Painful and swollen testicles
- ?? Swollen glands, especially in the groin area

If you have any of these symptoms or observe any of these signs you could have an STI. You should see a health worker or doctor immediately.

Sometimes you can have an STI without any signs or symptoms. If your partner has any complaints, get yourself checked. Sometimes the signs or symptoms go away, but the infection stays. Don't ignore any signs and symptoms, even if they stop.

Getting treatment:

- ?? Treatment for STIs is very safe and effective. Treatment at government clinics and hospitals is free and of very high quality.
- ?? The sooner you get treatment for an STI, the easier it will be to treat.
- ?? It is important that your sexual partner or partners also get treatment. If they do not, you could be re-infected with the STI by your untreated partner. If you have sex, you should use a condom until your treatment is finished.
- ?? It is very important that the treatment is completed. Do not stop the medicine when the signs or symptoms disappear. This could result in the infection becoming resistant to the treatment, and more difficult to treat.
- ?? If the treatment does not work, you should go back to the clinic or hospital.

Remember that all health workers or counselors have been trained and instructed to:

- ?? treat what you tell them confidentially;
- ?? provide a private place for you to talk;
- ?? not judge you or your situation;
- ?? be understanding, and allow you to express your feelings;
- ?? advise you of your options, but not make decisions for you;
- ?? give you information that will help you make informed decisions;
- ?? be supportive.

Keep yourself healthy and get regular checkups!

ENDS.

Transport to Pongola is available - for more information please contact Lindiwe Khuzwayo on 083 393 9943