

WHAT IS PREZCOBIX®?

- PREZCOBIX® is a prescription HIV-1 (Human Immunodeficiency Virus 1) medicine used with other antiretroviral medicines to treat HIV-1 infection in adults. HIV is the virus that causes

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by Winnie McCroy
EDGE Editor
Thursday Oct 20, 2016

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Federal officials say that more cases of sexually transmitted diseases were reported last year than ever before. And it comes just as state and local health departments are losing funding.

NBC News **reports** that more than 1.5 million people were reported to have chlamydia, the most common STD. And according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 400,000 cases of gonorrhea and nearly 24,000 cases of syphilis have been recorded. While all three can be cured with antibiotics, people often don't know they're infected because

early stages don't come with obvious symptoms.

"The STD epidemic is getting worse in the United States and, in fact, is at its highest levels yet," said Dr. Jonathan Mermin, director of CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention.

In fact, said the Mermin, 2014 was also a banner year for STD's, but this year is even worse, and it's probably not attributable to better reporting of cases.

"Last year was the first year that we saw increases but those increases are actually continuing and at a higher rate," Mermin said.

Unsurprisingly, gay and bisexual men account for most of the new cases, with high numbers among young adults in their teens and early 20s. The CDC warned that effective HIV drugs may be partly to blame, as youth forget about the risk of other STDs.

"Half of all STDs occur in youth under age 20," said Mermin, who warned that the trend could become worse, due to under-funded public health programs. "That is correlated with an eroding infrastructure for sexually transmitted disease clinics. In 2012 alone, half of state public health programs had to close some of those clinics."

He encouraged parents, teachers and providers to provide young people with safe and effective ways to prevent STDs, saying that "Good sex education prevents STDs," and "there is no evidence that talking about sexually transmitted disease prevention increases sexual activity."

While some reports have linked dating and hook-up apps with an increase in STDs in some communities, Mermin said there's no hard evidence to show cause and effect. And he said such apps can be tools for good.

"The dating apps can also be vectors of prevention by increasing the amount of prevention information that people can see and also by linking people to STD and HIV testing," he said.

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Winnie McCroy is the Women on the EDGE Editor, HIV/Health Editor, and Assistant Entertainment Editor for EDGE Media Network, handling all women's news, HIV health stories and theater reviews throughout the U.S. She has contributed to other publications, including The Village Voice, Gay City News, Chelsea Now and The Advocate, and lives in Brooklyn, New York.

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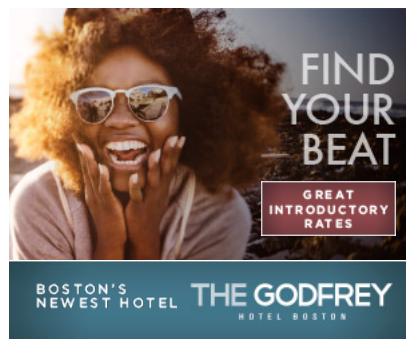
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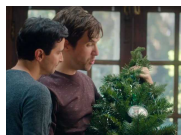
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