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Every year there are more than 19 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in the United States. By the age of 25, an estimated one in two sexually active young people will get an STD. In 2009, Lee County saw Chlamydia cases increase over the prior year from 58 to 84 cases- a 45% increase and Gonorrhea cases from 5 to 11 cases- a 120% increase.

STDs often show NO SYMPTOMS, so many of those infected do not know they are infected. The only way to know for sure if you or a partner has an STD is to get tested. However, unless you have asked for a sexual health checkup, most healthcare providers will not automatically test you for STDs and HIV- you have to ask.

GYT, **Get Yourself Tested** is a campaign between MTV, the Kaiser Family Foundation, Planned Parenthood and the CDC, to help encourage young people to make responsible decisions about their sexual health, and to create a social movement around getting tested for STDs.

Getting tested is easier than ever before. Urine-based tests are now available for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea, two of the most common STDs. The Lee County Health Department uses these urine-based tests in its STD clinics. Testing for Genital Herpes, HIV and Syphilis are also available at the health department.

Getting tested for STDs can be one of the most important things you can do for your health. To learn more about the GYT campaign or for information on STDs go to www.itsyoursexlife.com, www.cdc.gov, or www.lchd.com. You can also learn more about the Lee County Health Department on Facebook at www.facebook.com/LCHDIL. To schedule an STD/HIV test, call the Lee County Health Department for an appointment at 815-284-3371.