

Houston Syphilis Outbreak on High Alert

Contributed by Tom McGregor
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The City of Houston is struggling to contain a major outbreak of syphilis, as disclosed by local officials on Wednesday. The Houston Chronicle reports that, "Houston's health department reported a nearly 10 percent increase in new infectious syphilis cases during the first seven months of 2012 compared to the same time period last year. The outbreak reverses a trend of syphilis cases decreasing between 2008 and 2011." Health officials "strongly recommend that medical providers, particularly those that provide health services for men, determine if their patients are at increased risk for syphilis. They "also urge medical providers to offer testing for syphilis, immediately report syphilis to their local health department and provide prompt treatment to infected people and their sexual partners."

As reported by the Houston Chronicle, "a total of 318 infectious syphilis cases were reported in Harris County from January through August of this year, according to the Houston health department. The total for all of 2011 was 264. the 2012 cases amounted to 7.5 cases per 100,000 people, up from 4.2 percent through the same period in 2011. The recent high is 7.8 cases per 100,000 people in 2007."

Approximately 39 percent of people with infectious syphilis in 2012 had also tested positive for HIV.

To read the entire article from the Houston Chronicle, link here: Tmcgregordallas@yahoo.com