



# Sexual Health Awareness Month

**Sexual Health** goes beyond prevention of STIs - it incorporates a multifaceted conversation. According to the American Sexual Health Association, Sexual Health is:

- Understanding that sexuality is a natural part of life and involves *more than sexual behavior*.
- Recognizing and *respecting* the sexual rights we all share.
- Having access to sexual health *information, education, and care*.
- Making an effort to *prevent unintended pregnancies and STDs* and seek care and treatment when needed.
- Being able to experience sexual *pleasure, satisfaction, and intimacy* when desired.
- Being able to *communicate* about sexual health with others including sexual partners and healthcare providers.

<http://www.ashasexualhealth.org/sexual-health/>

[http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/sexual\\_health/sh\\_definitions/en/](http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/sexual_health/sh_definitions/en/)

**STD Q&A:**

<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/teens/preventing-pregnancy-stds/what-do-i-need-know-about-stds>

## STD/STI Testing in Japan

Testing for STDs/STIs in Japan can look very different than in our home countries. Experiences can vary surrounding language ability, location, and need. Do not let perceptions or difficulties get in the way of your health. If you are unsure of your well being or are sexually active please seek out testing. Below are links to Japan Healthcare Info, which provides a general overview of the testing experience in Japan, and information and resources compiled by Stonewall.

Japan Healthcare Info:

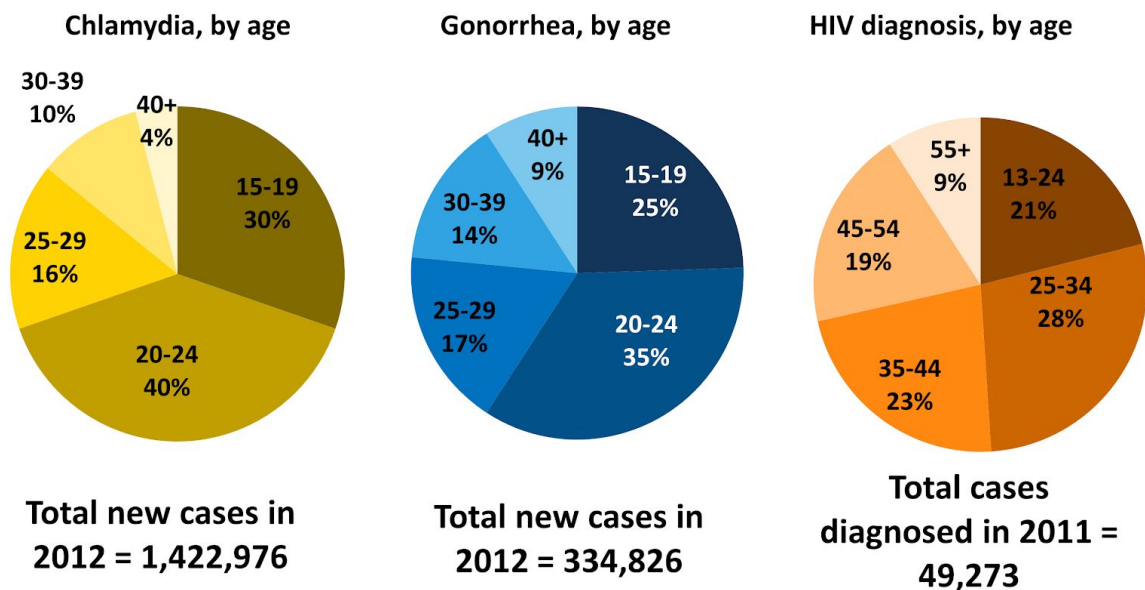
<http://japanhealthinfo.com/sexual-health/>

Stonewall Resources:

<http://stonewalljapan.org/resources/>

Figure 4

### Most New Cases of Sexually Transmitted Infections Occur in Youth and Young Adults



**NOTE:** Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding and exclusion of infections diagnosed in persons <15 for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea and <13 for HIV diagnosis.

**SOURCE:** CDC, Reported STDs in the United States: 2012 National Data for Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and Syphilis, 2013. HIV Surveillance Report: Diagnosis of HIV Infection in the United States and Dependent Areas 2011, 2012.



<https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/fact-sheet/sexual-health-of-adolescents-and-young-adults-in-the-united-states/>

## **Self-Care**

Besides the obvious Taking Care Of Yourself part, self-care also means accepting and loving oneself, despite or because of flaws and imperfections. It is multidimensional and integral to one's physical, mental, and emotional relationship to sex. A relationship with one's self, their partner(s), and their health practitioner. This also includes speaking out against unpleasant circumstances that could be changes. In other words:



## ***Using your voice.***

No one deserves to be treated in a way they do not like. You own the right to speak out and the responsibility to look out for yourself and voice your concerns.

### ***Self:***

We know what we want and what we don't want, what feels good and what doesn't, what we need and what we don't. Our bodies are ours, this endows us with the responsibility to take care of them. From at home check ups like breast cancer or testicular cancer to trying out a new toy, these are experiences that allow us to learn more about our bodies and make sure that we are sexually healthy. Our wants, needs, and preferences will evolve with us- this is okay, it's all part of the process of learning more about ourselves.

### ***Partner(s):***

“What's a partner gotta do with “sexual self-care”?”

If engaging in sexual interactions with them, then many a thing. It is important to communicate with our partners about what feels good, what doesn't, about consent, status with STIs, using protection, contraception, preventative medication, and risk behaviors. Across individuals, sexualities, and gender identities, we all have different sexual needs that should be addressed with our partners for a healthy and fulfilling sexual life together.

### ***Health Practitioner:***

Having open and honest communication with a health practitioner can help to calm any nerves or answer any questions one may have regarding their sexual health with an expert's knowledge and opinion. For example, doing an at home cancer screening could involve asking a health practitioner on what to look for and how to administer it and a discussion if anything concerning arises. In working with a health practitioner it

is important that one feels comfortable so it may take time to find a match that is able to provide that but it is time well invested.

<http://womanlab.org/strategies-we-love-for-sexual-self-care/>

<http://teenhealthsource.com/blog/sex-and-self-care/>

Less than 1% of your care activities happen with your doctor



move more



learn great nutrition



increase mental resilience



sleep well & enough



quit smoking, alcohol, & bad food



manage chronic conditions

