

Media Release

Sunburn isn't the only thing to think about

For immediate release, Friday 19th October 2007

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Sunburn isn't the only thing to think about

As you toss off your winter woollies and your hormones kick in again, it's important to remember that just as warmer weather can mean a lot more sexual action, it can also mean your chances of catching an STI (Sexually Transmissible Infection) are also greater.

In the last ten years, since 1996, the rate of STIs has increased, particularly amongst gay and same sex attracted men. Since 1997, the rate of Chlamydia in particular (amongst the general population in SA, not just gay and same sex attracted men) has increased by 300%! (1047 cases in 1997: 3127 cases in 2006).

Gay Men's Health's Drama Down Under campaign highlights the need for STI awareness and regular STI testing.

STIs include Chlamydia, crabs, genital and anal warts, gonorrhoea, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, herpes, scabies, shigella and other gut bugs, syphilis and HIV.

You can't tell if a guy has an STI just by looking at him.

And not all STIs have symptoms either. Some guys may have no obvious symptoms, others mild symptoms and some more severe.

Even without symptoms, you may still have an STI and still be able to pass it on – only testing will let you know.

If you think you have an STI, get a check-up. If your regular doctor doesn't see many gay or same sex attracted men or you don't want them to know you have sex with men, try a different doctor or go to Clinic 275 at 275 North Terrace, Adelaide. Opening hours vary so 'phone 8222 5075 or visit the website: <http://www.stdservices.on.net/clinic275/>

While the best way to prevent HIV transmission among men is to have safe sex by using a condom and water based lubricant for anal sex, condoms will not prevent transmission of some other STIs.

For further information on STIs, visit <http://thedramadownunder.info/> or contact Man2Man InfoLine on 8334 1617.

Country callers should call 1800 671 582.