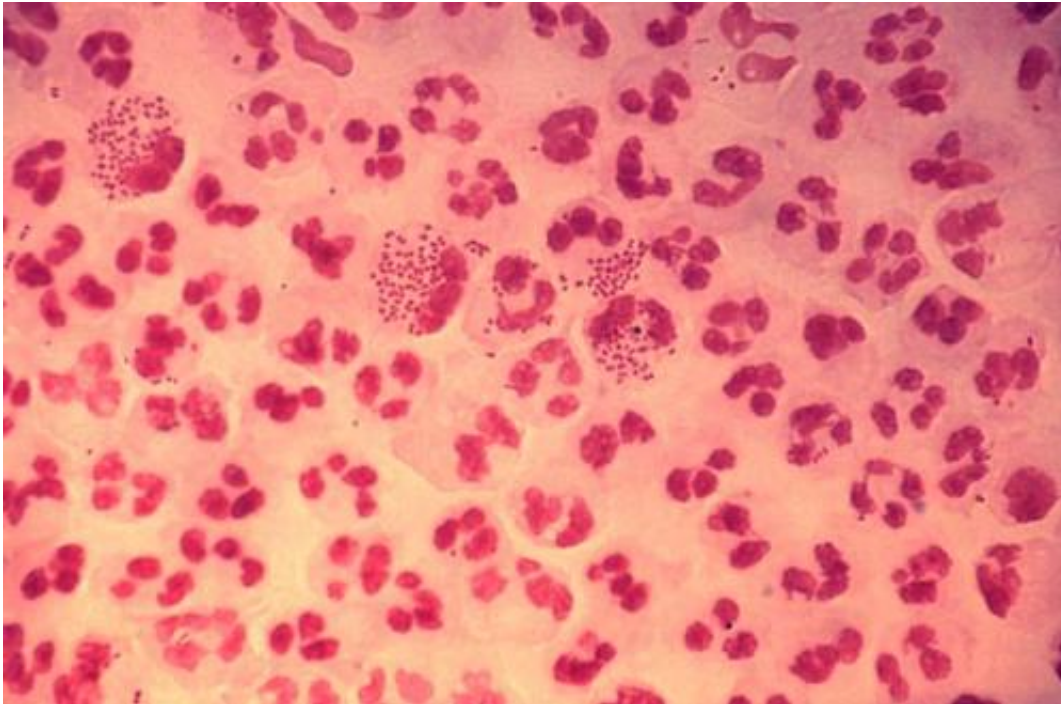


Chlamydia expert weighs in on rise of STDs

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Credit: CDC

The big three bacteria of sexually transmitted diseases — chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis—are on the rise according the Center for Disease Control. A report issued last week shows that reported infections of all three increased in 2015 to an all-time high.

David Gondek, an assistant professor of biology who has been studying the interactions between chlamydia bacteria and host cells, said the rise in infections speaks to the importance of keeping money flowing into

treatment centers.

"These increased infections come at a time when over half of the nation's STD clinics have been underfunded or closed in the past year," Gondek said. "Thus, our ability to combat these infections is significantly diminished."

The CDC report notes that treatment of bacterial STD infections has an estimated \$16 billion impact on the country's [health care](#) system; that amount will only go up if [infection](#) rates continue unchecked.

Reported cases of chlamydia rose 6 percent and topped out at over 1.5 million infections, with 15- to 24-year-olds accounting for more than two-thirds of those cases. Gonorrhea saw a 13 percent increase with almost 400,000 cases, while syphilis cases rose 19 percent to nearly 24,000 infections.

Gondek notes that all three diseases can be treated with antibiotics, but such treatment may be losing its effectiveness.

"As antibiotic resistance continues to spread, particularly among gonorrhea cases, our ability to control these diseases will falter," Gondek said. And while the development of vaccines to treat these infections may offer hope, they are only in the research stages.

Gondek's sentiments echo those of the CDC report, which stresses the importance of maintaining surveillance, testing and treatment of STDs.

More information: Reported STDs at Unprecedented High in the U.S.: www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom/2014/05-press-release.html

Provided by Ithaca College

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