

**Online, personalized STD test recommendation is the first developed by a national team of academic and medical experts targeted to college students and young adults**

**[STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org) features an interactive, expert-based approach to STD testing**

**CHICAGO – February 9, 2010 - [STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org)** is the first website to provide an interactive, personalized STD test recommendation developed by academic and medical experts. This expert-based tool incorporates screening guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), and the U.S. Preventive Service Task Force (USPSTF).

Researchers report that more than two-thirds of all STDs occur in young adults age 25 and younger<sup>1</sup>, and according to Lynn Barclay, president of the American Social Health Association, STD rates among young people are at epidemic levels.

Consider further that a recent Harvard University study<sup>2</sup> published in the journal *Pediatrics* found that 40% of parents bring up sex only after students become sexually active. College students and other young adults who are sexually active don't commonly access health care professionals for STD information and testing. Students are increasingly turning to peers and the internet for information and testing options.

[STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org) is organized in a university format with rich media experiences for the under-25 crowd. There are departments, faculty, courses and events available on the site, all for the purpose of delivering engaging and useful STD information and testing resources. The interactive test recommendation at [STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org) is designed to emulate a professional pre-test counseling discussion. This assessment delivers a personalized recommendation for testing of the most common and prevalent STDs including Chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, syphilis, HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.

[STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org) also provides expert advice, short movies and free music downloads to enhance learning in a contemporary, non-commercial, non-judgmental way. The site features clips from the short movie, "The O Mission." In one clip, a college-age rock singer at risk for Chlamydia goes online, where she and many of her peers are comfortable searching for answers. She gets expert advice to sort her risk and to learn to manage the situation. Students completing the test recommendation at [STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org) get two free downloadable songs from the band "Lip Tease" that performed the original soundtrack of "[The O Mission](#)," and can select appropriate tests online at [getSTDtested.com](http://getSTDtested.com).

This age group is at ease with receiving information electronically, including STD testing information. "One of Detroit's most successful programs led us to determine that text messaging helps enrollment and retention of young HIV positive persons in their medical care," says Patrick Yankee, manager of HIV continuum of care services for the Michigan Department of Community Health. "It is very clear that we as an industry must employ all forms of technology when conveying treatment options."

"A health risk assessment online like the test recommendation tool at [STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org) includes questions similar to the type of dialogue that I use with my patients. It is critical for them to know that they are not at risk for all STDs," says Dr. Greg Sarlo of Psychological Consultations, past president of the Illinois Psychological Association and core faculty at the Adler School. "For over 30 years, I've worked with individuals at risk for, and infected with, sexually transmitted diseases. There is a lot of confusion. Some online testing sites either do

not have selection tools or take the approach that individuals should be tested for everything. This is just not true,” says Dr. Sarlo.

Today there are 17 million students<sup>3</sup> enrolled in college, and most students don't know their STD status. Testing is available at some campus clinics, yet many students do not use their services. Many campuses simply don't have any clinic services available at all.

Health services vary from campus to campus. “It is important for university leaders to give students as many options as possible for maintaining their sexual health. For some students, it is the first time they are away from home. Getting trusted, expert advice is critical for young people who want these types of conversations and who recognize all options. A personalized health risk assessment is the first step,” says Dr. Barbara Van Der Pol of Indiana University Department of Medicine.

“The test recommendation tool provided by [STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org) is a comprehensive and accurate online approach to helping consumers select STD tests that are appropriate for them,” said Lynn Barclay, president of the American Social Health Association. “The tool presents leading U.S. guidelines in a clear format for those seeking greater knowledge of their sexual health.”

[STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org)'s personal test recommendation tool was developed and reviewed by academic, medical and health experts in response to concerns that consumers were being forced to select their own tests vs. receiving an expert-based recommendation. Public health officials also complained that other online test recommender tools guided consumers wrongly to test for all of the most common STDs. [STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org)'s tool is based on an assessment that directs consumers only to those tests for diseases based on their stated profile and national statistics. The review experts included: Dr. Barbara Van Der Pol, Indiana University; Lynn Barclay, American Social Health Association; Patrick Yankee, Michigan Department of Community Health; and Dr. Neil Skolnik, M.D., Professor of Family and Community Medicine at Temple University.

### **About STD University**

[STDUniversity.org](http://STDUniversity.org) is actively seeking 501-c (3) status as a non-profit organization whose mission is to find new ways and methods to educate primarily techno-savvy millennials (18-to-29-year olds) to take action for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. The site provides edutainment-based, non-judgmental information about STDs. It is the first online site to provide an interactive, personalized STD test recommendation developed by academic and medical experts.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Healthy People 2000 Midcourse Review and 1995 Revisions

<sup>2</sup> Pediatrics

<sup>3</sup> American College Health Association

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