



April is Sexual Health Month



Another active duty Sailor or Marine is diagnosed with HIV about every four days.^{1,2} In 2012, more than 5,000 cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea or syphilis were diagnosed among active duty Sailors and Marines.³ In addition to STIs, unplanned pregnancies are also an issue in the Navy and Marine Corps. In 2012, only one of three enlisted Navy women said her last pregnancy while in the Navy was planned.⁴ Of those who experienced an unplanned pregnancy, half said that they were not using any form of birth control when the pregnancy occurred. In 2008, only half of unmarried, active duty men, and only one-third of women, in the Navy and Marine Corps reported using a condom the last time they had sex.⁵ The Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC), Health Promotion and Wellness (HPW) department's Sexual Health and Responsibility Program (SHARP) encourages you to promote Sexual Health this April to prevent these negative outcomes and improve the state of sexual health among our Sailors and Marines.

Sexual health is a state of well-being in relation to sexuality across the life span that involves physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual dimensions and is more than merely the absence of disease, ailment, or

Sexual Health and Responsibility

In observance of Sexual Health Month, we are highlighting our Sexual Health and Responsibility Program (SHARP).

The vision of SHARP is a Department of the Navy (DoN) cultural norm in which physical and social sexual health are encouraged, supported and expected; and a DoN population in which all pregnancies are planned, and sexual violence, coercion, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, are prevented.

To sign-up for NMCPHC's sexual health promotion newsletter, SHARPNews, [click here](#).

Practical tools, educational resources and prevention strategies, including best practices for preventing STIs and HIV, and family planning are available from [SHARP](#), and from the [Health Promotion Toolbox for April - Sexual Health month](#).





dysfunction. Sexual health is also an intrinsic element of human health that includes: the ability to understand the benefits, risks, and responsibilities of sexual behavior; the prevention and care of disease and other adverse outcomes; and the possibility of fulfilling sexual relationships. Sexual health is impacted by socioeconomic and cultural contexts—including policies, practices, and services—that support healthy outcomes for individuals, families, and their communities.⁶ Knowledge and responsibility at the individual level, the clinical provider or health educator level, and the policy level are all vital to the promotion and protection of sexual health.

Resources You Can Use

Please consider distributing the following resources to your audiences throughout the month of April. If you reuse or reproduce any of these materials, we request you please include the following attribution: "Content courtesy of the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center's Health Promotion and Wellness Department" and please [email](#) to let us know so that we may track the reach of our materials.

Article: The Facts about Emergency Contraceptive Pills

The rules governing access to emergency contraceptive pills have been a moving target these last few years, so now might be a good time to review the facts. Unplanned pregnancies among Navy and Marine Corps enlisted women are, unfortunately, too common. Emergency contraceptive pills may be helpful in some circumstances. [Click here](#) for more information on emergency contraception methods.

Article: Promote the Sexual Health of Sailors and Marines

People in the business of keeping Sailors and Marines healthy, spend a lot of time talking about tobacco, nutrition, and exercise. Meanwhile, much less time is spent talking about sexual health. But if you think about it, a smoking, burger-eating, couch-potato can deploy. Conversely, a Sailor or Marine who just discovered she has an unintended pregnancy or he has HIV is typically out of the fight, at least for a while. [Click here](#) to find out more about promoting the sexual health of Sailors and Marines.

Additional HPW Resources

Check out our additional resources! These innovative and evidence-based health promotion and wellness resources and services were developed to facilitate readiness and resilience, prevent illness and injury, hasten recovery, and promote lifelong healthy behaviors and lifestyles for Sailors and Marines.

- [HPW Campaign Homepage](#)
- [HPW Partnership Factsheet](#)
- [HP Toolbox](#)
- [Archived Webinars](#)
- [Reproducible Materials](#)

To learn how our programs can help keep your service members fit for service and improve overall health, please visit our [April Health Promotion Toolbox](#).







Social Media Messages



The following social media messages will direct you to resources for Sailors and Marines. Please feel free to share with your audiences. Like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#)!

Facebook and Twitter Messages for you to post:



Social media messages 1:

  Positive? Negative? Not Sure? Check this site from @CDC to find an #HIV or #STD testing site near you: <http://hivtest.cdc.gov/Default.aspx> #GYT


Social media messages 2:


  Every 4 Days. Over the past decade, another Sailor or Marine has been diagnosed with #HIV about every 4 days. <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/reproductive-sexual-health/Pages/hiv-prevention-resources.aspx> #GYT

Social media messages 3:

  Do you know the benefits to a long-acting reversible contraceptive such as an IUD or hormonal implant? Learn more: http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/reproductive-and-sexual-health/larc_individuals.pdf #PublicHealth

Social media messages 4:

 Women aged 16-24 should be tested for Chlamydia every year. Ask your doctor for your test: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/reproductive-and-sexual-health/sharp-poster-ct-2013.pdf> #GYT

 HPV vaccination can prevent genital warts and cervical cancer! Available now for people aged 9-26. Three shots needed. Have you started? Ave you finished? <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/reproductive-and-sexual-health/sharp-poster-hpv-2013.pdf> #GYT

Contact us if your organization would like to collaborate with us on social media messages or if you would like for us to share your messages on our [Facebook page](#).





Webinar Calendar

We host monthly healthy living webinars for health educators and other health professionals as well as beneficiaries to create awareness of the health promotion and prevention resources, tools, and programs offered by the HPW department to motivate healthy behaviors.

Date	Webinar Title	Time
16 April 2014	Navy Medicine and Unplanned Pregnancy Prevention	1200-1300 ET

For many of our webinars we offer continuing education units (CEU) for Certified Health Education Specialists (CHES). If you are interested in attending one of our webinars click [here](#) for registration details.

Upcoming Training

Our education and training programs equip Navy and Marine Corps command personnel with the tools, education, and programmatic practice programs and interventions at the local command level. To learn more, visit our [Health Promotion training page](#).

Contact Us

Please let us know how we can help highlight your resources for service members, veterans, families, and health professionals. We welcome your [feedback and suggestions](#), and look forward to continued collaboration with your organization.

References:

1. AFHSC Medical Surveillance Monthly Report. 2011;18(8).
2. NMCPHC NBIMC. HIV Seroconversion Data. 2013.
3. NMCPHC EpiData Center. Sexually Transmitted Infections Annual Report 2012.
4. NPRT. 2012 Pregnancy and Parenthood Survey.
5. Bray R et al. 2008 DoD Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Active Duty Military Personnel.
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Health Resources and Services Administration Advisory Committee on HIV, Viral Hepatitis, and STD Prevention and Treatment

