



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
February 14, 2005

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Emily Snooks: (214) 363-2004

Press Release

Feb. 14-21, National Condom Week: Condoms Still Best Defense

PPNT provides low-cost STI testing and birth control supplies for men and women

DALLAS – National Condom Week begins today, Valentine’s Day, to raise awareness about the prevention of ever-increasing unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STI). Texas has the highest rate of teen births in the nation and almost half of the 19 million new STI infections reported annually are among those ages 15-24 according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

PPNT provides both women and men with low-cost accessible reproductive health care in their 28 clinics across North Texas. Patients can purchase birth control supplies including condoms and emergency contraception (EC) and can be tested for STI’s including HIV.

Dallas ranks eighth and Fort Worth ranks tenth in the nation among cities with the highest reported rates of syphilis. (CDC) These are alarming statistics and latex condoms are still the most effective contraception for pregnancy and STI prevention.

Here’s why condoms pass the test:

- 1) Condoms are classified as a Class II medical device by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which puts them in the same league as prosthetic heart valves and IV tubing. This means that the manufacturing standards for condoms are very, very high.
- 2) **The failure rates for condoms are very low - but those failure rates are often complicated by human error.** Common ways to break a condom are by using oil-based lubricants, such as lotions or Vaseline, which break down latex, or by opening a condom wrapper with the teeth or long nails, causing small tears. (CDC)
- 3) The bottom line is that correct and consistent use of latex condoms can greatly reduce the risk of infections, particularly life-threatening infections like HIV. While nothing aside from sexual abstinence provides 100 percent protection from all infections, condoms are the best defense for sexually active women and men.



For more information on clinic locations and hours of operation patients may call 1-800-230-PLAN.

For 70 years, PPNT has provided compassionate medical care in North Texas. In 2004, PPNT clinics served more than 80,000 patients in its 28 clinics. PPNT also provides health education outreach to 12,000 individuals a year.