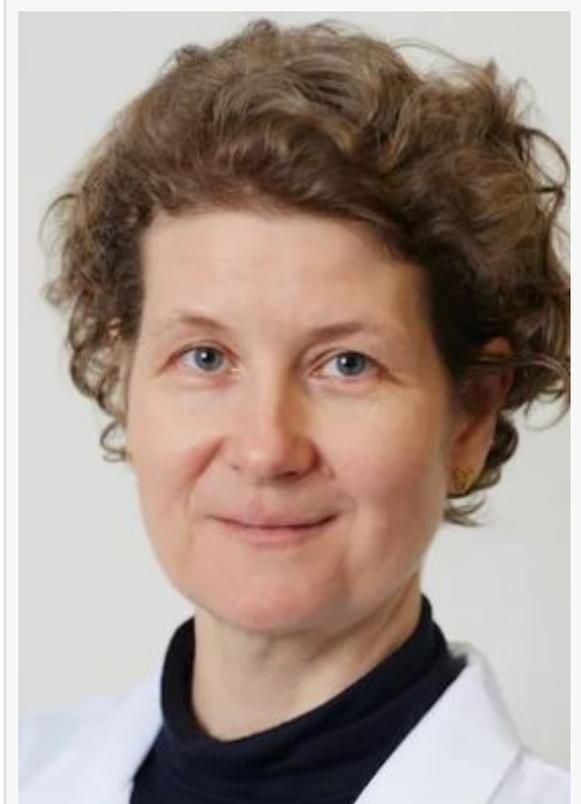


Screenings Best Defense Against Spread of Sexual Diseases

LabFinder Medical Experts Drs. Robert Segal and Kamila Seilhan Agree STIs at Epidemic Levels; Offer Prevention Tips.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, July 27, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Digital portals that give patients easy access to health resources; offer quick, protected results of [screenings and tests](#); and readily connect patients and clinicians serve as frontline defense against rapidly expanding numbers of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and diseases (STDs) in this country, according to Robert Segal MD, co-founder and CEO of [LabFinder](#).

Experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concur. In its STD Strategic Prevention Plan for 2022-2026, the CDC indicates its efforts include “promoting and strengthening the use of innovative technologies and developing new mechanisms for accessing, analyzing, and disseminating data” (bit.ly/3nUeqqu). LabFinder is just such a technology.



Dr. Kamila Seilhan

“When it comes to determining whether a patient has a sexually transmitted infection or actual disease like gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes, syphilis, or HIV, [immediate screening results are a must](#). That’s because STIs are often asymptomatic. A person can be an unknowing carrier who passes the infection on to one or more partners. Not only do STI laboratory screenings give at-risk individuals both peace of mind and control of their own health, but proper testing helps slow the spread of sexually transmitted infections, which have serious consequences if left undetected and unchecked,” says Kamila Seilhan DO, internist and LabFinder medical director.

Those “consequences” can include fertility and pregnancy complications, organ damage, various cancers, blindness, and even dementia, Dr. Seilhan states.

The CDC calls STIs a major public health issue and warns that such infections and the diseases they cause are reaching epidemic proportions in the United States and throughout the world. In a media statement released in April 2023, the CDC advises that syphilis rates, for example, are



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“surging, increasing nearly 32 percent” in the U.S. between 2020 and 2021 and resulting in 220 stillbirths and infant deaths within that time span” (bit.ly/3pAM2di). Gonorrhea and chlamydia rates are up 4 percent in the same period. In fact, the agency estimates approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population is infected by one or more sexually transmitted pathogens (bit.ly/3nNpgP8).

Highly recommended for regular (at least once a year) STI testing are all females under age 25 and anyone who is

pregnant, men and women who are sexually active with multiple partners, those who engage in sex without barriers like condoms, individuals who undertake oral or anal sex, gay and bisexual men, and persons who suspect – or know – they have had sex with a partner who is positive for STI. All individuals between ages 13 and 64 should consider undergoing one-time testing for HIV.

Although research continues on advancements in vaccines and other approaches to prevent and treat STIs and STDs, Dr. Segal emphasizes that “high performing” laboratory testing currently remains a primary defense. STI tests involve screening of a person’s blood, saliva, or urine; swab samples taken from the genital or anal areas or from the cheek; or a pap smear when testing for presence of human papilloma virus (HPV).

Dr. Segal developed LabFinder as an online scheduling platform for all patient laboratory and radiology appointments. The system connects patients, doctors and lab and radiology centers for a seamless medical experience; offers timely test scheduling; and serves as one central repository for users’ testing results. Most importantly, test results are released simultaneously to patient and clinician and are often available on the same day or within 24 hours, significantly reducing patient anxiety and wait times. For patients without a doctor, LabFinder offers MinuteMed and telehealth services for getting the scripts for these exams.

“The beauty of digital electronic portals like LabFinder is their ability to link patients with nearby, certified laboratories that offer the necessary STI and STD screenings at the lowest possible cost and provide accurate results to patients and their doctors privately and quickly – sometimes within hours,” Dr. Segal states. “Unfortunately, despite the importance of these tests, patients sometimes avoid them because they are ashamed, concerned about others finding out or about having to tell their partner, or simply worried about the expense.”

Meanwhile, a spate of companies has started marketing at-home STI tests, much in the same vein as the government-approved home tests used during the COVID pandemic. But Dr. Segal cautions against too much reliance on their use. He refers to a commentary published in a November 2022 issue of the journal *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*. In it, the author states, “A major barrier to [the home-testing] approach is that currently no STI test systems are Food and

Drug Administration (FDA) cleared for home specimen self-collection. There is considerable uncertainty whether specimen self-collection outside of clinical settings meets regulatory standards. There is also uncertainty if the approach is permissible as a 'laboratory-developed test' after validation data are acquired by each laboratory."

The best course of action to prevent the spread of STIs is individual responsibility, Dr. Seilhan emphasizes. To that end, she offers these tips:

- Use condoms and other barriers when having sex outside of a monogamous and marital relationship. Non-latex condoms are available to those with latex allergies.
- Reduce the number of sex partners. Fewer partners mean less chance for STI or STD.
- Take notice of potential STD symptoms – such as genital discharge (from the vagina in women and urethra in men), appearance of genital sores or warts, unusual swellings or itching in the genital area, anal or rectal pain, pain during intercourse or a burning sensation when urinating, and abdominal pain. Get the problem checked and tested promptly.
- Understand the risks, based on sexual habits and experiences.

"Most importantly, if you are in a high-risk group for STI or STD, ask your doctor for an order to allow appropriate testing. Screenings take only minutes to do and can help stop the continued spread of these infections," Dr. Seilhan says.

Bio: Robert Segal MD, board-certified in cardiovascular disease, echocardiography, and nuclear cardiology. He is founder of Manhattan Cardiology and Medical Offices of Manhattan, and Co-Founder of LabFinder. <https://www.labfinder.com/>

Kamila Seilhan DO is a New York City-based internal medicine specialist who has been in practice for more than 20 years. She is board-certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine. In addition to her practice, she serves as medical director of LabFinder.

About: LabFinder is a consumer-facing platform that transforms the patient experience through seamless lab & radiology testing, guiding patients to conveniently located testing centers, handling appointment bookings, offering telehealth services, and allowing patients to review their test results all in one place. LabFinder supports patients through their care journey from booking to billing—reducing expenses, hurdles, and frustrations. www.labfinder.com.

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