

**ALLEN BEALS, M.D., J.D.**  
*Commissioner of Health*



**MARYELLEN ODELL**  
*County Executive*

**ROBERT MORRIS, P.E.**  
*Director of Environmental Health*

## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

1 Geneva Road, Brewster, New York 10509

**Phone # (845) 808-1390**

Fax # (845) 278-7921

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact: Barbara Iardi, Public Information Officer, (845) 808-1390**

### **Free STD Testing Now Offered in Putnam County**

Brewster, NY— Nearly 19 million new sexually transmitted disease (STD) infections occur each year, according to estimates from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). These include diseases such as chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis. Many of these cases go undetected and untreated because less than half of those, who should be screened, actually get tested. Men and women of all ages, backgrounds and economic levels get STDs, but almost half of new cases are among young people, ages 15 to 24. Now Putnam residents have a new place to get tested— and without a fee. Beginning September 20, the Putnam County Department of Health will be offering a free STD testing program.

Testing will be available Tuesdays and Thursdays at two Putnam County Department of Health locations—121 Main Street in the Village of Brewster and at the main office at One Geneva Road, near the intersection of Route 312 and Interstate 84. Free anonymous and confidential HIV testing is also available at the same time for residents' convenience. Appointments are preferred and those interested should call 845-808-1390, x43114. Tuberculosis (TB) testing is also available for at-risk individuals.

STDs are one of the most critical health challenges facing the nation today. Many types initially cause no symptoms, especially in females. When symptoms do develop, they may be confused with those of other diseases not transmitted through sexual contact. Without treatment, STDs can lead to major

health problems such as sterility, permanent brain damage, cancers, and even death. Having an STD can also increase a person's susceptibility to HIV infection. These facts and statistics highlight the importance of testing for and treating STDs.

The Health Department's mission is to improve and protect the health of Putnam County residents through prevention of illness and injury. For more information, please visit our website at [www.putnamcountyny.com](http://www.putnamcountyny.com); or visit our social media sites on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/putnamhealth](http://www.facebook.com/putnamhealth) and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

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