



PROGRAM SUMMARY

As they prepare to go back to class after gym, Kevin tells Larry that he's been to the clinic and learned that the itching and burning he's suffering from is chlamydia, a sexually transmitted infection. The doctor has given him an antibiotic, a single dose taken in the doctor's office, to clear up the infection. Kevin must now tell his two sexual partners, Lea and Daisy, so they can be treated, too. Larry is puzzled as to why Daisy needs to be told. According to him, she "gets around." "Because she may not even know she has it," is Kevin's answer.

A flashback shows Kevin learning from Dr. Thomas that chlamydia is one of several sexually transmitted infections rapidly spreading among teenagers. If left untreated, the doctor says, it can cause sterility in girls (rarely in boys). Girls can get pelvic inflammatory disease or PID, which can cause chronic pain as well as sterility. Latex condoms can protect against chlamydia, Dr. Thomas explains, but are not 100 percent effective because of breakage or incorrect use. The only sure thing, he advises, is abstinence.

Turning to viewers, the doctor then notes that there are more than 50 known sexually transmitted infections, and that one in four teens will contract one of these by the time they are 21. Furthermore, he says, young people under 25 contract chlamydia at the rate of four million new cases each year. He goes on to describe the most common infections among teenagers as chlamydia, gonorrhea, human papilloma virus or HPV, herpes, and HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Chlamydia and gonorrhea are bacterial infections, he says, and can be cured by antibiotics, while the other three are viruses that can't be cured but can be effectively treated.

When Kevin meets Daisy to give her the news that she might have chlamydia, she denies at first that she has it. But then she realizes that Kevin thinks she gave it to him, and angrily storms off. Kevin next informs Lea, saying how sorry he is and how he must have gotten it from Daisy. Lea tells Kevin that assuming things about people's sex lives is a mistake. She informs Kevin that there was someone she had sex with before him, someone who might be responsible for infecting the three of them.

At a teen hotline room, Miguel is fielding a call from Jessica who needs advice about whether

to have sex with Larry. She's confused—some of her friends have started having sex, she explains, while others have opted for abstinence. When she tells Miguel that Larry has had sex with someone else, he advises that Larry get tested—sexually active teens should get tested twice a year. Larry could have an infection and not know it. He advises Jessica to base her decision on her own feelings and needs, not on Larry's. Larry may look healthy, Miguel tells Jessica, but even a healthy-looking person can transmit an infection.

Lea tells Kevin she has not yet seen a doctor because she fears her parents might find out, so Kevin suggests she go to the clinic with him. He also tells her to inform her former sexual partner, Dan. When she protests, Kevin explains that Dan could be giving the infection to other people, just as he gave it to her and him. Lea decides to confront Dan.

Back at the clinic, Dr. Thomas is talking to Kent about his herpes symptoms. He explains that herpes can't be cured, but can be treated with medicines to make the symptoms disappear. You have to be careful and always tell your sexual partner you have it, he warns Kent. He advises Kent to use condoms, which can provide an effective barrier. If a girl gets herpes and is pregnant, her baby can get it and be left blind or brain-damaged.

Back at the teen hotline room, Miguel is fielding a call from April, who wants to know if an STI can be contracted without having intercourse. If someone has an infection and another person touches that area, Miguel tells April, he or she can also become infected, since infections are carried in bodily fluids like vaginal fluids, semen, and blood. You can get an STI from regular intercourse, oral or anal intercourse, or just from fooling around, Miguel declares.

Lea arranges to meet Dan and tell him that he's infected her. He had told her he was a virgin, too, and that he loved her. Now she knows neither is true, and she informs him that she's lucky that what she has isn't AIDS. In her visit to the clinic, Lea learns that the reason she didn't experience continuous burning and itching is that with chlamydia, as well as other STIs, the symptoms can disappear, sometimes only temporarily. Lea asks about AIDS and

Dr. Thomas explains that when a person becomes infected with the virus he or she often gets flu-like symptoms lasting about a week. The virus then becomes dormant, often for many years. At some point the virus reemerges and begins to break down the immune system, precipitating a number of infections. That's when we say a person has AIDS, he explains. He advises an anxious Lea to reconsider her decision to have sex.

The scene switches to a party. Larry and Jessica are making out, while in a corner Kent is quietly getting drunk. Larry suggests that he and Jessica go to his house, so they can have their own party, but Jessica has made her decision and turns him down. When he says that she's a tease, she tells him she really likes him, but for her, having intercourse would be a mistake. Meanwhile, Penny, another girl at the party, has been eyeing Kent. After talking it over with her friend, she gets up the nerve to go over to him and asks to share his beer.

Larry leaves without Jessica and meets Kevin who is waiting for Lea. Kevin tells Larry he thinks he's in love with Lea, and that having sex with her was a mistake. Sex is never a mistake, asserts Larry. Kevin wonders, however, if he and Lea can be in love without sex. Larry's thinks that's possible for Kevin, if not him.

The next scene finds Kent back at the clinic, telling Dr. Thomas how guilty he feels after having sex with Penny without telling her he has herpes. They were both drunk. Dr. Thomas advises Kent to tell Penny she needs to be tested, and refers Kent to a counselor who can provide support for coping with his situation.

Turning to face the camera, Dr. Thomas tells viewers that drug and alcohol use put teenagers at higher risk for STIs, including AIDS. All these infections are serious, he continues, and some can be fatal. If you're sexually active, he adds, seeing a doctor twice a year for screening is extremely important. Better still, he advises, make the safest choice: abstinence. You won't be alone, and you won't be sorry. The program concludes with graphics listing the symptoms of STIs (burning, itching, discharge, pain urinating, bleeding, sores, warts and lesions) plus the hotline of the Center for Disease Control.