

Rare STD Spreads Among Gays In Canada, Massachusetts

The rare STD known as Lymphogranuloma Venereum (LGV) is making a reappearance in North America among gay and bisexual males in Massachusetts and now in Canada.

LGV is attributed to unsafe sex practices among gays and bisexuals who are involved in group sex activities in bathhouses and through Internet chat rooms.

The STD is also associated with drug use and the lower of inhi-

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Alfred DeMaria, the state's director of communicable disease control. "It's definitely a sign of unsafe sex, and that's a concern in terms of other sexually transmitted diseases and HIV. Now, I think we're at the point that people need to pay attention to it."

The *Globe and Mail* in Canada reported on June 1, 2005 that 22 cases of LGV have been diagnosed in the past few months—all in gay and bisexual males with high-risk sex practices.

LGV was virtually unknown in industrialized nations until 2003 when cases were discovered in The Netherlands among sex tourists. It spread from there to Belgium, France, Germany,

bitions that result in unprotected sex.

A patient in Boston told his physician that he probably caught the STD while visiting Brazil. The disease is endemic to Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia but has also appeared in the Netherlands and other European nations in recent years.

Since January, six cases of LGV have been discovered in Massachusetts. "We hadn't seen an LGV case for years," said Dr.

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Sweden, Britain, and is now in the U.S. and Canada.

According to the Canadian news report, "half of the infected practiced 'barebacking'" – anal sex without a condom. "They also engaged in 'booty bumping' – ingesting the drug crystal meth anally—and in fisting," according to the newspaper. All had the same strain of LGV that had been found in The Netherlands.

According to STD experts, LGV increases the chances of contracting and spreading HIV and hepatitis. It creates sores that make it easier for infections to enter the bloodstream.