

Chlamydia tops list of infectious diseases in Halton

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Halton Region released its annual Infectious Diseases Report last week showing chlamydia as the region's most commonly reported communicable illness.

There were 1,081 reported cases of the sexually transmitted infection (STI) in 2016, with influenza (the flu) coming in a distant second on the list with 609 reported cases.

Gonorrhea came in third with 172 cases, while salmonellosis and Campylobacter enteritis rounding out the top five with 137 and 136 cases, respectively.

In total, there were 2,575 total cases of infectious diseases reported to the Halton health department in 2016. That number was up

significantly over the five-year average between 2011-2015, which saw an average of 1,878 cases reported annually over that time.

Chlamydia, influenza and gonorrhea all saw significant spikes in 2016 over their respective five-year averages. Reported influenza cases nearly double with 609 cases last year compared to an average of 309 cases reported in each of the previous five years.

Gonorrhea, also transmitted sexually, spiked to 172 cases in 2016 from an average of 90 cases per year the previous five, while chlamydia added 266 cases last year over the previous five-year average of 815.

According to the report, the figures for those three diseases specifically were "statistically significantly (i.e. unlikely to be due to

chance alone) higher than the previous five-year average."

"Chlamydia is on the rise in Halton and Ontario. The age-standardized rate of chlamydia in Halton has increased from 104 (per 100,000) in 2017 to 228 (per 100,000) in 2016. Some of the increase in chlamydia rates can be attributed to improvements in testing, however, many cases may go undiagnosed, as the majority of people do not experience symptoms but are still infectious," read the report.

In Halton and across the province, rates of chlamydia are highest among youth and young adults and females were more likely to be diagnosed with the disease than males.

● See GONORRHEA, page 4



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Halton Region releases annual Infectious Diseases Report showing some big spikes over the previous five-year average.

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