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NEWS ROUNDUP

'My Contraception Tool' launched

Sexual health charities Brook and FPA have launched 'My Contraception Tool' (v. 1.0) a web tool designed to support people's contraceptive choices by evaluating their preferences and priorities as well as their physical needs. This new web tool allows patients to search for options in contraception tailored to their needs. The circumstances, medical history and personal preferences are input by the user online. These data are then processed and each contraceptive method is ranked in order to suit individual needs. The results can then be printed and taken to help initiate conversations with a health care professional.

The tool is designed for use by men and women of any age who want to use contraception and is linked to further information about each contraceptive method as well as a wealth of information on other aspects of sexual health.

Sources: www.brook.org.uk/mycontraceptiontool
www.fpa.org.uk/mycontraceptiontool

Study confirms HPV vaccine more effective than previously thought

Scientists at the Health Protection Agency (HPA), the University of Manchester and the Manchester Royal Infirmary have found that the cervical cancer vaccine could prevent more cases of the disease in England than previously thought, according to a

study published in the *British Journal of Cancer*. This could potentially reduce the annual number of cases from around 3000 to less than 700.

Cervical cancer is caused by an infection called human papillomavirus (HPV). The study found that 73–77% of cervical cancer cases were caused by either HPV type 16 or 18, both of which are prevented by the current vaccine used in the UK. Prior to this study, the available data had suggested 70% of cases were caused by these types. Current vaccines do not protect against all HPV types that cause cervical cancer, but they do protect against these two most common types.

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'The Middle-age Spread' (STIs in the over-50s)

Growth in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) amongst the over-50s has reached alarming proportions. A recent poll by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain found that almost one in five of 45–54-year-olds admitted to having unprotected sex with someone other than a long-term partner. And a further 20% believed that

their chances of picking up an STI were "next to nothing" in these circumstances. A campaign to remind the over-50s that they are at risk from STIs has been launched by sexual health charity, FPA. Entitled 'The Middle-age Spread', the campaign has a message for men and women in that age group who are starting new relationships: "You may not think it applies to you, but if you are having sex with a new partner, you can catch an STI as easily as someone in their 20s".

Source: <http://www.fpa.org.uk/Campaignsandadvocacy/SexualHealthWeek/stisandsafersexover50>

New interactive text messaging service for young people

Ask Brook has added a text service to its helpline and online service. Young people can text Ask Brook with any question about sexual health or relationships and receive an individual response within one working day. The text number is 07717 989023 and all text messages are confidential. Texts will be charged at the young person's standard network rate. Ask Brook Helpline on 0808 802 1234 is available from 9.00am until 7.00pm Monday to Friday.

Source: www.askbrook.org.uk

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