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Selective Screening for Chlamydial Infection In Women: A Comparison of Three Sets of Criteria

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Selective screening has been associated with marked declines in the prevalence of chlamydial infection, the most common bacterial sexually transmitted disease (STD) in the United States. A comparison of the performance of different selective screening criteria in three groups of family planning and STD clinic clients shows that criteria recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention performed well overall, detecting 88-89% of infections by screening 58-74% of women. Criteria based on age alone performed best among low-risk clients with a low prevalence of chlamydial infection, particularly when all women younger than age 25 were screened (sensitivity, 84-92%); the age-based criteria still required screening only 59-71% of all women. Selective screening criteria should be based on age, risk profile and chlamydia prevalence in specific clinical settings, and should be reevaluated as chlamydia prevalence declines.

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