Potential for a Vaccine against Gonorrhea?

In July 2017, Lancet published an observational study from New Zealand describing a 31% estimate of effectiveness against gonorrhea for a group B meningococcal vaccine. While a few other similar ecologic data analyses have suggested a similar effect, all such studies show associations, and do not prove causality; the results should be interpreted very cautiously. Still, the potential for a vaccine that provides some protection from gonorrhea offers a glimmer of hope for a new addition to the STD prevention toolbox, of particular need in light of the increasing incidence of gonorrhea in San Francisco and in the US and the continuing concern that Neisseria gonorrhoeae, the bacteria that causes gonorrhea, can build resistance to antibiotics.

We in the SFDPH STD group are certainly watching next steps for this potential vaccine candidate closely. In the meantime we thank San Francisco providers for their efforts to prevent ongoing STD transmission by ensuring prompt treatment of all diagnosed gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis according to the CDC STD Treatment Guidelines (last updated 2015). Providers who need any assistance in treating their patients for syphilis, please call 415-487-5531; for assistance with treating gonorrhea or chlamydia can call 415-487-5530.

The full Lancet article referenced above can be found on our SF City Clinic webpage here: http://sfcityclinic.org/moreresources/#Publications