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HEALTH

Condom STD labeling sparks debate

Bush wants information on HPV, or genital warts, on condom labels

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CHICAGO, Illinois (AP) -- It's just a little bit of wording on a condom packet -- so small that Justin Kleinman hadn't noticed it until he squinted to read it recently.

"This is completely pointless," the 24-year-old Chicagoan said of the warning telling him that, while condoms can help prevent the spread of some sexually transmitted diseases, there are no guarantees.

Even so, that tiny bit of print is at the center of a raging debate now that President Bush has asked the Food and Drug Administration to modify the current warning to include information about human papillomavirus, commonly called HPV or genital warts.

On one side are scientists who believe that condoms should be promoted as a crucial line of defense against several STDs and cervical cancer. On the other are groups that advocate waiting for sex until marriage, and who see the dangers of HPV as an argument for their cause.

"The lack of information getting to the American public regarding this disease is



(AP PHOTO)

A federally required warning on a packet of condoms tells people how they help prevent the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

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