John Contracts Skin Disease at Spa

Donna M. Hughes, Dr.
Melanie Shapiro, Esq
“John” Contracts Skin Disease at Spa in Providence

Melanie Shapiro, co-founder of Citizen Against Trafficking, has learned that a virus that causes a skin disease called Molluscum contagiosum is being spread at a spa-brothel in Providence.

Molluscum contagiosum is a skin disease caused by a virus.¹ The infection causes small white, pink, or flesh-colored bumps or growths on areas which came in contact with the infected skin of another person.

Yesterday (Oct 1, 2009), a “John” ---someone who buys sex---sent out a warning to his fellow sex-buyers: “Condoms don’t cover everything.” He claims he visited the One Spa in Providence and engaged in sexual intercourse with a woman there. He used a condom.

Molluscum contagiosum is spread by direct skin contact with infected skin. The “john” reported finding “a nice patch of bubbles on my crotch” a couple of weeks after buying sex.

Molluscum contagiosum can be treated or will disappear on its own, although it takes time. According to the Center for Disease Control “the bumps disappear on their own within 6 months. However, they may not go away completely for up to 4 years.” The person can infect another person or another part of the body as long as the skin bumps are present. The virus can live in towels or clothing and infect others on contact.

The “john” says: “I’ll be dealing with this shit for the next 3 or 4 months. If I’m lucky. Never mind explaining this to a girl I was just starting to date.”

Citizens Against Trafficking strongly advises the new girlfriend to find another boyfriend!

One Spa is located above the Federal Hill Gazette on Federal Hill in Providence. Several weeks ago, when a Boston Globe reporter came to Rhode Island to do a story on the debate over prostitution laws, Melanie Shapiro showed the reporter this spa-brothel.

Note on the use of the term “john”: Some people, particularly men who are named John, object to referring to men who buy sex by the slang term “john.” Citizens Against Trafficking understands this, but we refuse to give them legitimacy by calling them “clients” or “customers.” Please help us come up with another name for these offenders. We need a unique term like batterer, molester, or rapist for the act of using a woman or child in prostitution.

¹ See Center for Disease Control information, http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/molluscum/overview.htm