

Actress plays role in AIDS campaign

By FIONA MACMAHON

ACTRESS Do Do Cheng took time out yesterday to join the fight against AIDS as part of the Government's first campaign specifically aimed at women.

The Government is moving to warn women about the threat of AIDS after the number of them testing positive for the HIV virus doubled over the past 12 months to 16.

Ms Cheng has been cast in a public announcement, scheduled to be aired on television next month, advising women to take precautions against the deadly disease.

But the actress, who is more usually seen in locally produced comedies or promoting travel agents, said she had volunteered her time for free because she was concerned about AIDS among women.

"AIDS is an important issue in the 1990s and I would like to bring that message to the public," Ms Cheng said.

"The rate of people contracting AIDS in Hongkong is not as high as America or Africa but we have to alert people to the dangers."

The film shows Ms Cheng putting the finishing touches to her make-up before she turns and advises women to make sure their partner uses a condom.

"You know, we spend a great deal of time in front of the mirror protecting our appearance and mostly it's for the man in our lives," she says.

Turning to face the camera head on she urges: "So if he really cares about you he'll want to protect you against the threat of AIDS.

"Make sure your partner does the right thing and always uses a condom.

"AIDS concerns everybody."

Ms Cheng said that she hoped the film would encourage women to be more assertive in making sure they were properly protected against catching AIDS.

"You can get the disease whether you are rich or poor, male or female," she warned.

The scriptwriter, Principal Information Officer, Mr Redge Solley, said he had chosen to focus on the use of make-up and the superficial protection it affords to women versus the need to take real protection against something as life-threatening as AIDS.

Ms Cheng believes that celebrities should use their influence productively.