

50 Things You Need to Know About STIs



Anyone Can Get an STI

- Everyone who has sex needs to know about sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- STIs are sometimes called sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- STIs can be passed from one person to another through vaginal, anal or oral intercourse.
- Some STIs can also be passed through kissing and intimate touching.
- Some STIs are passed through sharing needles for injection drugs, steroids, vitamins, hormones, body piercing or tattoos.
- Some of the most common STIs are chlamydia, herpes, HPV, gonorrhea, syphilis, hepatitis B and HIV.

Chlamydia

- About 2.8 million people in the U.S. are infected with chlamydia (klay-mid-ee-ah) each year.
- Most people with chlamydia don't have symptoms.
- Possible symptoms include an unusual genital discharge, pain and burning when urinating.
- Chlamydia is treated and cured with antibiotics.
- If not treated, chlamydia can cause sterility in women.



Hepatitis B

- Hepatitis B is most commonly passed through unprotected sex and sharing needles.
- Hepatitis B can be a short-term illness, but some people stay chronically ill.
- Symptoms include fever, diarrhea and vomiting. But you may not have symptoms.
- Hepatitis B can cause liver damage.
- Everyone should get vaccinated against hepatitis B.

Herpes

- Herpes can be passed through kissing, intimate touching and unprotected sex.
- Symptoms include an itching or burning sensation and oral or genital blisters.
- Herpes symptoms often go away and come back later. Symptoms can be controlled with medication.
- Herpes cannot be cured. The virus stays in your body forever.

Syphilis

- An early sign of syphilis is a painless sore in or around the vagina, penis, mouth or anus.
- Syphilis is spread by contact with open sores (usually during sex).
- If not treated, syphilis can cause serious health problems, including damage to the brain and nervous system.
- If treated early, syphilis can be cured with antibiotics.



Gonorrhea

- Many people with gonorrhea have no symptoms.
- Possible symptoms include an unusual discharge from the penis or vagina and pain when urinating.
- If not treated, gonorrhea can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in women and swelling around the testicles in men. It can also spread to the blood and joints.
- Gonorrhea can be treated and cured with antibiotics.

HPV

- There are more than 40 types of sexually transmitted HPVs (human papillomavirus).
- Some types of HPV cause genital warts. Others increase the risk of cancers of the cervix, throat, anus, penis, vagina and vulva.
- You can have HPV with no symptoms.
- HPV vaccination is the best way to prevent many types of related cancers.
- Women should get regular screenings for cervical cancer beginning at age 21.

HIV/AIDS

- HIV is the virus that causes AIDS.
- HIV is passed by having unprotected sex and sharing needles.
- HIV is not passed through casual contact like shaking hands, hugging or sneezing.
- Having another STI increases your risk of getting HIV.
- The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested.

You Can Have an STI Without Knowing It

- People with STIs often have no symptoms.
- Even if you don't have symptoms, you can pass an STI to another person.
 - If you are sexually active, get regular STI tests.
 - All STIs can be treated. Some cannot be cured, but treatment will help with symptoms.
 - If an STI is not treated, it can cause serious health problems.

GET TESTED.



You Can Protect Yourself

- You can reduce your risk of STIs by abstaining from vaginal, anal and oral sex and never sharing needles.
- If you choose to have sex, lower your risk by always using a latex or polyurethane condom for vaginal, anal and oral sex.
- Ask your doctor about vaccines that can protect against certain STIs.
- Talking with your partner(s) about safer sex may help lower your risk.
- Having sex with one uninfected person who only has sex with you may also lower your risk.
- The most important thing to know about STIs is that you can prevent them.

If You Think You Have an STI

- Talk to a health care provider and ask to be checked for STIs.
- You can get more information about STIs and testing from your local health department, clinic or health care provider. Or visit www.cdc.gov/std

GET THE FACTS ABOUT STIs.



 **Sexual Health**
Talk About It!



@vochange

2020 Reviewed for accuracy. ©2001 Journeyworks Publishing. All Rights Reserved. Title #5127e

Broward County Public Schools has licensed the content of this document from Journeyworks Publishing. This document, its text or illustrations may not be otherwise copied, reproduced or distributed without prior written permission of Journeyworks Publishing.

This pamphlet is not a substitute for professional medical care. If you have questions or concerns, please talk with a health care provider.