

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

What are STIs?

STIs are infections that are usually spread from person to person through sexual contact.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of an STI may or may not be present. However, some symptoms to look for include:

- Burning or pain when you pee or have sex.
- Sores, bumps, or blisters in your genital area (penis, vagina) or anus.
- For women, unusual discharge from your genitals or anus. For men any discharge at all.
- Pain in your lower stomach.
- No symptoms at all!

Who is at risk?

Anyone who has ever had sexual contact is at risk for STIs. As many as 75% of sexually active Americans will get an STI. An estimated 19 million new infections will occur each year. 15-24 year olds account for nearly half of all STI diagnoses each year.

How to know if you have an STI?

Get tested! Since it is common to have an STI with no symptoms at all, it is extremely important for anyone who is sexually active to get tested at least once a year, if you have a new partner, or immediately if you notice any symptoms. Avoid sexual contact until you and your partner have completed treatment.

What can you do if you have an STI?

Many STIs are easily cured with prompt treatment. Since untreated STIs can lead to more severe health problems it is important to seek treatment as soon as possible. Teens 17 and under do not need parental consent to get testing & treatment for STIs may be free at most family planning clinics.

How can you prevent yourself from getting an STI?

Using condoms every time you have sex & communicating with your partner can help reduce the risk of getting an STI, but nothing is 100%

Understanding [Bacterial] STIs...Bacterial infections are caused by bacteria which are single-celled "living" microorganisms that reproduce by dividing. They are treated with antibacterial antibiotics.

STI	Symptoms	Tests & Treatments	Transmission
Chlamydia	Appear 1-3 weeks after contact. Women- no symptoms, bleeding, unusual discharge, pain with urination or sex. Men- no symptoms, burning, discharge, itchy, irritated redness.	Test: Culture or urine Cure: Antibiotic	Vaginal, anal, oral sex & sharing of sex toys. Mother to child during birth.
Gonorrhea	Appear a few days after contact. Women- no symptoms, unusual discharge, irritation, pain, fever. Men- no symptoms, painful urination, pain in testicles, discharge,	Test: Culture Cure Antibiotic	Vaginal, anal, oral sex, & sharing of sex toys. Mother to child during birth.
Syphilis	Primary-21 days after contact: hard painless sore. Secondary- 3-6 weeks after sore; rash on hands & feet, sores on genitals. Tertiary- 10-20 years after; blindness, heart disease, brain damage.	Test: Blood Cure: Penicillin injection	Contact with infectious sores, vaginal anal, oral sex. After first few years person is no longer infectious. Mother to child during birth.

Understanding [Viral] STIs...A virus is a capsules of genetic material which invade some cells & causes them to reproduce. Antiviral antibiotics are available for some types of viral infections — but not all.

STI	Symptoms	Tests & Treatments	Transmission
HIV/AIDS	Initial flu like symptoms appear 2-6 weeks after infection. Early on HIV is often undetected. 9-10 years- swollen lymph nodes, weight loss, diarrhea, fever, & cough. Late stages of HIV symptoms may be fatigue, night sweats, chills, persistent headaches, chronic diarrhea.	Test: Blood test or mouth swab Treatment: No cure. Antiretroviral drugs are used to treat HIV/AIDS in order to control the replication of the virus in the body.	Can occur when blood, semen, pre-seminal fluid, vaginal fluid or breast milk, from an infected person enters the body of an uninfected person. Mother to child during pregnancy, delivery, or through breastfeeding.
Herpes	Appear 2-20 days after contact. Recurrent blistering rashes, sores, painful urination, itching, discharge. Second outbreak can occur 3-6 months later. Varies greatly from person to person.	Test: Physical exam, viral culture, blood Treatment: No cure. Antiviral treatment to control symptoms & decrease outbreaks & transmission.	Vaginal, anal, oral sex, genital skin-to-skin contact. Mother to child during birth if mother has an outbreak. It is not necessary for sores to be present to transmit Herpes.
HPV Genital Warts	Appear 3-6 months after contact. Different strands of the virus show no symptoms, genital warts can lead to cancer. *See HPV Factsheet.	Test: Physical exam, pap smear used to detect women. Visual inspection for men. Anal pap smear. Treatment: No cure. Warts can be destroyed but not the virus.	Vaginal, anal, oral sex, genital skin-to-skin contact.
Hepatitis B Hep B	Appear an average of 90 days after exposure & typically last for several weeks but can last for up to 6 months. Fever, jaundice, joint pain, clay-colored bowel movements, vomiting, & dark urine. Risk of severe liver damage.	Test: Blood Treatment: Hep B vaccination available for all children & at risk adults. No meds to cure Hep B.	Contact with infectious blood, semen, pre-seminal fluid, vaginal fluids, & breast milk. Sharing contaminated needles, razors & sex toys. Mother to child. Two-thirds of Hep B infections are
Hepatitis C Hep C	May not appear for years. Jaundice, fatigue, dark urine, nausea, abdominal pain, and loss of appetite. Risk of progressing to cirrhosis & cancer.	Test: Blood test, liver biopsy Treatment: No cure. Interferon injections & oral anti-viral drugs for up to a year.	Contact with infected blood, mother to child during birth. Sharing needles; sexual transmission is rare.

Understanding Parasites...Parasites are organisms living in, with or on another organism (like a person)

STI	Symptoms	Tests & Treatments	Transmission
Trichomoniasis "Trich"	Appear 3-28 days after infection. Women- green, gray discharge with odor, itching, pain during sex, painful urination. Men- painful urination, discharge, irritation.	Test: Swab test Cure: Antibiotic	Can survive in wet towels or bathing suits for 24hours. Vaginal sex, sharing sex toys, finger – vaginal contact. Mother to child during birth.
Pubic Lice "Crabs"	Appear 4-5 weeks after infection. Itching, redness, inflammation.	Test: Physical exam, swab test Cure: Over-the-counter shampoo (wash all bedding)	Close contact, beds, sharing sex toys & undergarments.
Scabies	Appear 2-4 weeks after exposure. Itching mostly at night, bumps, rash.	Test: Scraping of the skin Cure: Prescription cream (wash all clothing & bedding)	Genital skin-to-skin contact, sexual or non-sexual. Sharing towels & clothing.