

STI's

STIs (sexually transmitted infections), sometimes called STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) or VD (venereal disease), are transmitted through bodily fluids when you engage in oral, vaginal or anal sexual contact.

Common STIs

Chlamydia is caused by bacteria you can be exposed to during unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sex with an infected person. You can be symptom-free even though you are infected and contagious, while others can experience genital discharge, itching or burning. It can cause serious health problems and can be treated and cured with antibiotics.

Gonorrhea is also caused by bacteria you can be exposed to during unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sex with someone who's infected. You can have no symptoms even though you are infected and contagious, while others might experience genital discharge or a burning sensation when peeing. Gonorrhea can cause serious health problems and can be treated and cured with antibiotics.

Syphilis is caused by bacteria you can be exposed to during unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sex with a person who already has the infection. Syphilis causes painless sores on the genitals, or they can be hidden in the mouth, vagina or rectum. It can also cause a rash anywhere on the body. The infection is spread through contact with the sores or rashes and can be treated and cured with antibiotics.

Trichomonas is an STI you can get by having unprotected vaginal sex with a person who already has the infection. It can cause serious health problems and can be treated and cured with antibiotics.

Herpes is caused by the herpes simplex virus. It causes painful sores around the mouth (cold sores) or on the genitals. You can get it by having skin-to-skin sexual activity (including kissing) or unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sex with someone who's infected. Right now there is no cure, but medication can help prevent outbreaks or reduce how long an outbreak lasts.

HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. HIV attacks your body's immune system, leaving it unable to fight certain infections. The virus can be found in and transmitted through blood, vaginal fluids, semen and breast milk. You can get HIV by having unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sex with an infected person. Sharing needles or other drug equipment with blood on them also can pass HIV. It can also be passed to a baby during pregnancy or breastfeeding. There is no cure, but it can be managed with medication.

Hepatitis B is caused by a virus found in the blood, semen, urine, vaginal fluid or saliva of someone who's infected. It can be passed through vaginal, oral or anal sexual contact, or by sharing personal items like toothbrushes, razors, needles or tattoo equipment. It can also be passed to a baby during pregnancy or breastfeeding. There is no cure, but it can be managed with medication. A vaccine is available.

Pubic Lice (crabs) are grey or brownish-red lice usually found in pubic hair. You can get crabs from sexual and non-sexual contact (like sharing bed sheets) with someone who is infected. You might be able to see the pubic lice or eggs. Other signs of infection include genital itching, blue spots on the skin of your pubic area or blood spots on your underwear. Non-prescription treatment is available at drug stores.

Scabies are caused by mites that push under the skin to lay their eggs, and are usually found between fingers, around genitals, on wrists or under arms. You may also get a rash on your body. You can get scabies from sexual and non-sexual contact (like sharing towels) with an individual who already has it. Scabies can be difficult to identify, so see a healthcare provider for proper diagnosis and treatment.

HPV (Human Papillomavirus) is a sexually transmitted virus that can cause genital warts in men and women. If left untreated, it can also cause cell changes on the cervix that can develop into cervical cancer. For women, yearly PAP tests and physical exams by your doctor can detect abnormal cells and genital warts. For men, self-inspection and yearly physical exams by a doctor can detect genital warts. There is no cure; however, there are treatment options available for genital warts and abnormal cervix cells.

This is an informational
handout only,
if you have any
questions or
concerns contact
PPR or your
family doctor

Planned Parenthood Regina

THE SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION PLACE

1431 Victoria Avenue, Regina, SK T: 306 522 0902
www.plannedparenthoodregina.com

HOURS

Monday, Tuesday	9-12	1-5
Wednesday, Thursday	9-12	1-7:30
Friday	9-12	1-5
Saturday	1-5	

STI's

STIs (sexually transmitted infections), sometimes called STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) or VD (venereal disease) can affect your general health and future fertility, but, when diagnosed early, they can be cured or managed through medication.

Risks & Symptoms

Some STIs show up as genital sores, burning or itchiness a few days after contact with a person who is infected, but many STIs, like chlamydia, gonorrhea, Hepatitis B and HPV, do not usually have symptoms you can see or feel. This means you can get and transmit an STI without even knowing it, so it's important to be tested for STIs if you're sexually active. You'll be protecting your own health and the health of your partner, too.

To be tested for STIs, visit

- Family doctors
- Walk-in clinics
- STD Clinic Regina
- Planned Parenthood Regina

The tests for chlamydia and gonorrhea are as easy as peeing in a cup while others, like the tests for HIV Hepatitis B and Syphilis, require a blood test.

Treatment

If you are diagnosed with an STI, it's important to follow your healthcare provider's treatment and follow-up recommendations. You can easily be reinfected if your partner is not treated as well, so they should be informed of your STI as soon as possible.

Help protect yourself from STIs

- Practice safer sex methods
- Talk to your partner about their STI status
- Use condoms

Common Questions

Where can I learn more about a specific STI?

The websites www.sexualityandu.ca/teens/sti.aspx and www.spiderbytes.ca/Health/Health_STIs_STIsByNames.shtml offer detailed information about various STIs.

How do I know if I have an STI?

The only way to know if you have an STI is to get tested, because many STIs have no symptoms you can see or feel.

Isn't it embarrassing to get tested for an STI?

STIs are among the most common infections occurring in young people, so don't let yourself feel ashamed, embarrassed or guilty. Healthcare providers are used to treating people with STIs, and won't judge you for being responsible about your health.

What are my chances of getting an STI?

If you're sexually active, you're at risk of getting an STI.

People are at higher risk if they begin having sex at a young age, have sex without using condoms, have multiple sexual partners or have partners who engage in this higher-risk sexual behaviour.

Some of the information from this sheet is taken from the Public Health Agency of Canada at www.publichealth.gc.ca/sti and Planned Parenthood Toronto at http://www.spiderbytes.ca/Health/Health_STIs_STIsByNames.shtml.

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