

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)



An STI is an infection that is passed on when you have sex.



An STI can make you feel very ill.



An STI can cause difficult pregnancies.



An STI can make men and women infertile (unable to have babies).

What are the common infections?



Chlamydia - Usually there are no symptoms so most people don't know they have it.



Gonorrhoea - The main symptom is discharge (leaking fluid) from the penis or bottom and pain when peeing. Most women do not have symptoms.



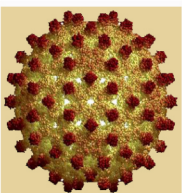
Genital herpes - The main symptom is itching around the genital area followed by blisters or sores.



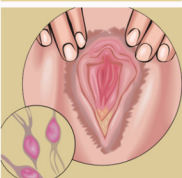
Genital warts - Warts can take about a year or more to grow. Sometimes you can't see them if they are inside the vagina or anus (bottom).



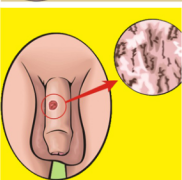
HIV and AIDS - This is a virus that is spread by having unprotected sex (e.g. no condom), sharing needles if taking drugs or by infected blood.



Hepatitis B - This is a virus. It is spread through unprotected sex, contact with blood, wee or blood-stained saliva (spit with blood in it). You may have no symptoms.



Trichomoniasis - This is when tiny parasites infect the vagina and the tube that you wee through (urethra).



Syphilis - This starts with a sore on or near the vagina or penis, or in the mouth or anus (bottom). Followed by a rash and feeling like you have the flu.



If you are worried that you or your partner have a sexually transmitted infection (STI), you should go to your doctor straight away.

What are the common symptoms?



Different liquids coming from the vagina or penis.



Heavy periods.



Bleeding between periods.



A pain or burning feeling when peeing.



A rash.



Itching or tingling around the genitals (penis/vagina) or anus (bottom).



Some STIs have no symptoms at all.

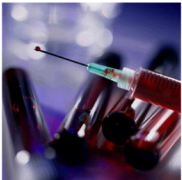
What are the tests and treatments?



Most STIs can easily be detected and treated at local clinics called Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM) clinics. They are usually based in local hospitals.



You can telephone the clinic to book yourself for a check-up or test.



If you have a test, it will probably be a blood test from your arm or a swab from the end of the penis or the inside of the vagina.



If you do have an STI, you should tell anyone that you are having sex with like your partner, boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife or lover.



Most STIs can be treated with antibiotics (medicines).

Making sure you don't get an STI



Using a male condom will stop STIs being passed on through sex.

They can be bought at chemists, supermarkets and public toilets. They are free in some clinics.

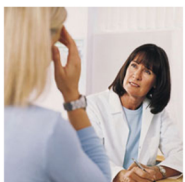


Using a female condom will stop STIs being passed on through sex.

They can be bought at chemists, supermarkets and public toilets. They are free in some clinics.



Dental dams (small squares of rubber) can be used during sex that involves contact between the mouth and vagina, or the mouth and the anus (bottom).



Speak to a health adviser. They will talk to you about how you feel and about how to have safe sex.

You are welcome to bring someone to support you.

Useful contacts



Brook
www.brook.org.uk
0808 802 1234



Terrence Higgins Trust
www.tht.org.uk
020 7812 1600



Condom essential wear
www.condomessentialwear.co.uk
0800 567 123

easyhealth.org.uk



Useful Information



Easyhealth has worked with Brook to make this information.



People with learning disabilities have worked with Easyhealth to make sure this information is easy to understand.



If you are worried about your health it is important to speak to a health professional like a doctor. A health professional will be able to explain it in more detail.



You can also call NHS Direct on 0845 4647.



For more information about EasyHealth call 020 8879 6333, or visit our website www.easyhealth.org.uk

easyhealth.org.uk

