

Understanding Sexually Transmissible Infections (STIs)



Today we will talk about...



- ✓ What you need to know about STIs
- ✓ How people get STIs and possible symptoms
- ✓ Who should get tested
- ✓ Where and how to get tested
- ✓ How to treat STIs
- ✓ Preventing STIs
- ✓ Sharing your STI status
- ✓ Getting help and support



What are STIs and why they matter?



STIs means Sexually Transmissible Infections:

- STIs are infections caused by bacteria, viruses or parasites
- STIs caused by bacteria are more common in Australia

STIs matter because:

- STIs can be treated, and some can be cured
- If not treated, they can lead to serious health problems
- Many people may have an STI without knowing which increases its transmission to other people

It's important to get tested regularly to know if you have an STI.



What are the most common STIs?



STIs caused by bacteria

- syphilis
- chlamydia
- gonorrhoea

STIs caused by viruses

- mpox (monkey pox)
- human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- genital herpes
- genital warts
- hepatitis B

STIs caused by parasites

- trichomoniasis (trich)
- pubic lice (scabies)

The most common STIs in Australia are chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis.

How do you get STIs?



During vaginal,
oral or anal sex



Sharing bodily fluids
including semen, vaginal
fluids, breast milk or
blood



Through close
skin-to-skin
contact



During pregnancy,
childbirth and through
breastfeeding

You cannot get STIs from...



Sharing food
or utensils



Sharing
toilet seats



Sharing showers or
swimming pools



Handshaking



Dry kissing

Common symptoms of syphilis



- ✓ Sores in or on the mouth, penis, vagina anus or cervix
- ✓ Red rash on the hands, back, chest or feet
- ✓ Swollen glands in your armpits or groin
- ✓ Fever
- ✓ Hair loss
- ✓ Headaches
- ✓ Tiredness

**If not treated, syphilis
can lead to serious
issues**



Common symptoms of chlamydia and gonorrhea

- ✓ Penis/urethral and vaginal discharge
- ✓ Pain in the pelvis
- ✓ Bleeding from the vagina
- ✓ Pain while peeing
- ✓ Pain during or after sex
- ✓ Pain in the testicles
- ✓ Anal pain or discharge
- ✓ Painful when passing stool

Regular testing is the only way to check if you have an STI.



Who should get an STI test?

Consider getting tested if you:



Had sex without
a condom
(unprotected sex)



Are a sexually
active man who
has unprotected
sex with men



Are pregnant
or planning
to get pregnant



Had an
STI in the last
12 months



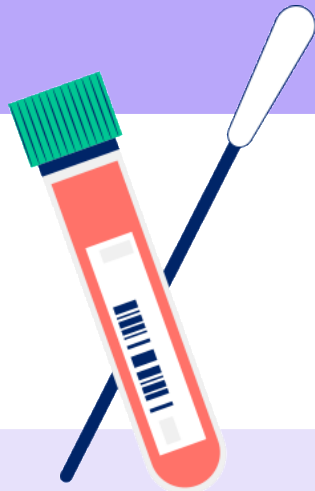
Or your sexual
partners have
any symptoms
(but most STIs don't
show symptoms)

Getting tested often is
good for your health

What are the types of tests for STIs?

syphilis

- a blood test
- a swab of the ulcer or sore



chlamydia and gonorrhoea

- a urine sample
- a swab from vagina, anus or throat



Regular testing is the only way to check if you have an STI.

Where can I get tested

for STIs?

You can get an STI test at:

- ✓ Your doctor or a GP
- ✓ NSW Sexual Health Clinics
- ✓ Family Planning Centres

STI testing is quick,
easy and confidential.



STI testing: What might you be asked?



- ✓ Do you have any symptoms you're concerned about?
- ✓ When was the last time you had sex?
- ✓ Have you ever been tested for STIs before?
- ✓ Do you have sex with people with a penis, a vagina or both?
- ✓ You can get STIs in your throat, bottom or genitals. Do you think we should test any of these sites?
- ✓ When was the last time you had sex without a condom?
- ✓ Do you use other contraception?
- ✓ Have you ever had unwanted sex?

What is the treatment

for STIs?



**Syphilis, chlamydia
and gonorrhoea are all
treated with antibiotics**

Reinfection
is possible.
Test often.



How can I protect myself from STIs?

Having safe sex is the best way to protect yourself.

Use condoms or dams when having any type of sex, including:

- ✓ Vaginal sex
- ✓ Anal sex
- ✓ Oral sex



Do I need to tell anyone I have an STI?

- ✓ Not legally required to tell someone
- ✓ Important to tell your sexual partners
- ✓ Responsible for taking reasonable precautions
- ✓ Criminal offence if transmission is intentional

**Having an STI is very common.
There is no need to be ashamed.**



What have we learnt today?



True or False?

1. Only people with multiple sexual partners get STIs.
2. You can tell if someone has an STI by looking at them.
3. You can get STIs by sitting on a toilet seat.
4. Condoms can completely protect against all STIs.
5. You can only get STIs from vaginal sex.

Where can I get help?

To find a doctor or GP

www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services

Sexual Health InfoLink

www.shil.nsw.gov.au or 1800 451 624

No medicare card required

Legal services (HALC)

www.halc.org.au or (02) 9492 6540

Let Them Know

www.letthemknow.org.au

A free notification service



Where can I find more information about STIs?



Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service

www.mhahs.org.au

Sexual Health Plus

www.health.nsw.gov.au/sexualhealth

Health Direct

www.healthdirect.gov.au/sexually-transmitted-infections-sti

International Student Health Hub

www.internationalstudents.health.nsw.gov.au/sti
(with translated factsheets in Nepali, Hindi, Thai and Mandarin)

Play safe

www.playsafe.health.nsw.gov.au
(sexual health information to young people across NSW)

Family Planning Australia

www.fpnsw.org.au

Where to get help in your language

If you need assistance with talking to your doctor or health provider in your language:

- ✓ Call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50
- ✓ The service is free and confidential
- ✓ Ask the receptionist to book a free interpreter for you



Messages to take away

- ✓ Most STIs don't show any symptoms, the best way to know if you have an STI is to get tested.
- ✓ If STIs are not treated, they may lead to serious health problems.
- ✓ STI testing is quick, easy, confidential and often free at sexual health clinics.
- ✓ Get tested regularly.
- ✓ All STIs are treatable and some STIs are curable.





Questions?

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August 2025

