

COMMON STIs

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus. For many people, there are no symptoms. But it may cause warts. Certain kinds of HPV lead to cancer. The HPV vaccine is recommended for all girls and boys between 11 and 12.

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection that's treated with antibiotics. It affects both men and women, and is more common in women. It doesn't always have symptoms, but it may cause painful urination and unusual discharge.

Gonorrhea is a bacterial infection that men and women can get in their mouth, rectum or reproductive system. Symptoms include unusual discharge, painful urination and bleeding. Most women don't experience symptoms. It's treated with antibiotics.

Syphilis rarely has symptoms. Some people infected with syphilis notice sores or a rash. If it is not treated, it can hurt your brain or heart, and even kill you. Syphilis is treatable when it is caught early.

Herpes is caused by a virus and cannot be cured, though its symptoms can be managed with medication. Symptoms include painful blisters or sores.

HIV is the virus that leads to AIDS. The disease destroys your immune system. Complications can lead to death. There is no cure for AIDS, but drugs can help people control symptoms and live longer.

GET TESTED: New York City Health Department clinics offer free, confidential testing and treatment. Health insurance, proof of citizenship and parental consent are not required. Call 311 or visit NYC.gov/health to learn more.



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SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

STAY SAFE AND
GET TESTED



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7 Ways to Protect Yourself

- 1. Use condoms and dental dams.** Use a new condom each time you have sex. New York City Department of Health gives out free male and female condoms. Call **311** to learn more.
- 2. Don't have oral, anal or vaginal sex.** Instead, enjoy other types of intimate contact.
- 3. Limit your partners.** Staying in a long-term relation with a healthy partner protects you against STIs.
- 4. Get tested.** Avoid sex with a new partner until you can both be tested.
- 5. Don't drink or use drugs.** You're more likely to engage in risky sexual behavior when you're under the influence.
- 6. Communicate.** Talk to your partner about safe sexual activities before any serious contact.
- 7. Never have unprotected sex.**

What to Look For

Many STIs show no signs or symptoms, but it's time to get tested if you notice any of these issues:

- Sores near the mouth, genitals or anus.
- Pain while peeing or during sex.
- Unusual discharge or bleeding.
- Pain in your lower stomach.
- Swollen lymph nodes, especially near your groin.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What is an STI?

An STI is a sexually transmitted infection. They are also known as sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and venereal diseases.

Who's at risk for STIs?

Sexual preference, ethnicity and lifestyle don't matter. Everybody who is sexually active is at risk.

What causes STIs?

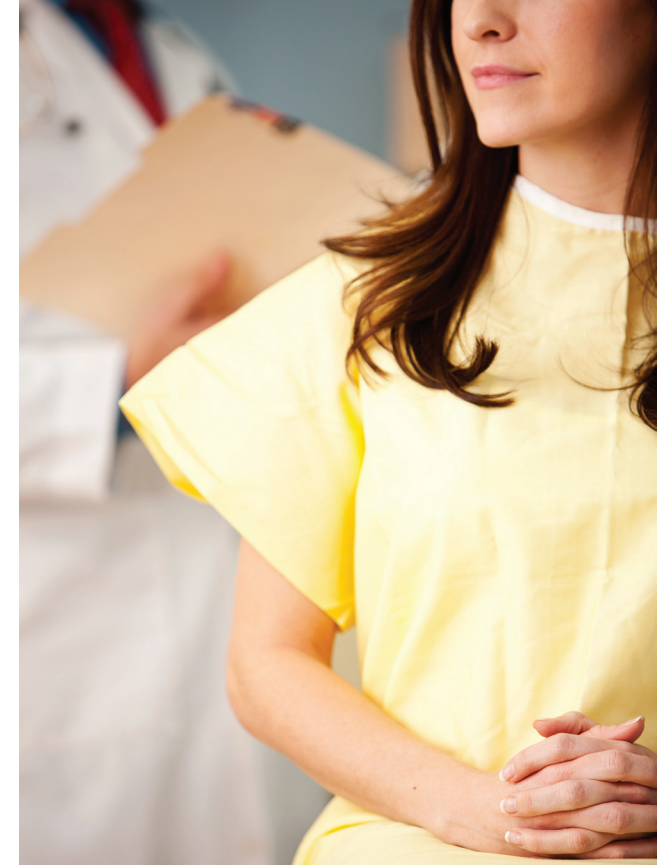
Bacteria, viruses and parasites cause STIs. They spread through intimate contact, including anal, oral and vaginal sex.

What's the big deal? STIs can be treated, right?

That depends on the STI. Some can be cured with medication. Others, like herpes and HIV, are viral and have no cure. Left untreated, STIs can cause infertility, cancer and, in some cases, death. This is why it's important to get tested regularly and to always use protection during sexual contact.

How do I prevent STIs?

Always practice safe sex. Use a condom. Get tested regularly, and ask your partner to get tested also.



BOTTOM LINE: Everybody is at risk. STIs don't always have symptoms, so it's important to get tested regularly if you are sexually active.

YOU HAVE AN STI. NOW WHAT?

BE HONEST



Be open with healthcare workers so they can provide the right treatment. They will not judge you. Anything you tell them will stay private.

FOLLOW THE PLAN



Listen to your doctors and follow their treatment plan. Take all of your medication and make follow-up health appointments.

SHARE



Tell your partners. Don't place blame. Instead, focus on getting treatment and preventing future infections.

GET SUPPORT



Contact your local health department clinic, where you can get treatment and partner services. Call **311** for information.