

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

An STI is any kind of bacterial or viral infection passed on through sexual contact without a condom. Sexual contact can include:

- **Oral sex** (licking, kissing or sucking someone's genitals)
- **Vaginal sex**
- **Anal sex**
- **Sexual touching**
- **Using sex toys**

HOW DO YOU GET TESTED?

Most STIs can be detected by a urine sample, blood test or vaginal swab.

Occasionally, if you have visible symptoms, you may need to have an examination from a nurse or doctor. If you do, there's no need to be embarrassed – they've seen it all before and just want to help!

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU'VE GOT ONE?

The two most common STIs, chlamydia and gonorrhoea, often don't have any symptoms so the only way to know you don't have them is to test.

If you do have symptoms, it's best to speak to a medical professional as soon as possible for help.

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT STIs?

CONDOMS

Using a condom correctly every time you have sex is the easiest way to protect against both STIs and unplanned pregnancy. You should use condoms on sex toys, too.

VACCINATIONS

There are vaccines available for HPV, hepatitis A and hepatitis B.

DON'T WORRY!

PREP/PEP

PrEP is anti-HIV medication that is taken daily, or before sex, in order to prevent HIV from taking hold in someone's body if they are exposed to it.

PEP is a combination of drugs which can be used to reduce the likelihood of someone contracting HIV after they have been exposed to it.

WHEN SHOULD YOU TEST?

If you are sexually active, you should test regularly and after each new partner.

It takes roughly two weeks for the most common STIs to show in tests, so if you don't have symptoms, it's better to wait at least two weeks after sex to do your test.

DID YOU KNOW?

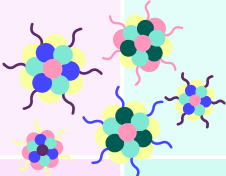
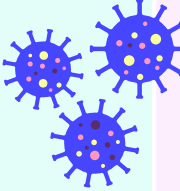
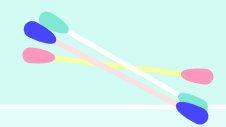
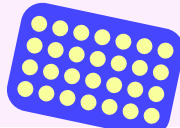
Anyone can get an STI. It doesn't matter how many times you've had sex or how many partners you've had.

WHERE CAN I GET TESTS AND TREATMENT?

Use our service finder to see where you can get tested and treated for STIs:

brook.org.uk/find-a-service

STIs can be passed on through unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sex, sexual touching and sharing sex toys.
HIV and syphilis can also be passed on by sharing needles. **Here are some other things you should know:**

	Chlamydia	Genital herpes	Genital warts	Gonorrhoea	HIV	Pubic lice	Syphilis	Trichomoniasis
SYMPTOMS	No symptoms in the majority of cases. Possible symptoms » Unusual discharge from the vagina, penis or rectum » Burning/itching in the genital area » Pain when peeing » Heavy periods or bleeding between periods » Pelvic/lower abdominal pain » Abdominal pain during sex » Bleeding during/after sex » Painful swelling of testicles 	Often no signs or symptoms. Possible symptoms » Flu-like fever, headache, aches and pains » Stinging, tingling or itching in the genital area » Small fluid-filled blisters which burst leaving small, red, very painful sores » Pain when urine passes over the sores » Possible discharge 	Often no visible symptoms and it can be months/ years before warts appear. Possible symptoms » Can appear alone or in clusters like a cauliflower » Normally painless but can be itchy » Appear in/around the vagina, anus, upper thighs and anywhere on the penis, scrotum or urethra 	No symptoms in many cases. Possible symptoms » Green/yellow discharge from the vagina » Green, yellow or white discharge from the penis » Anal discharge » Burning when peeing » Lower abdomen pain/tenderness » Heavy periods or bleeding between periods » Painful swelling of the foreskin » Pain or tenderness in the testicles	Around 80% of people will have a short, two week flu-like illness soon after getting the HIV virus. This may last for two to three weeks with sore throat, fever, tiredness, achy joints, swollen glands and a rash. After this, there may be no symptoms for many years. 	Symptoms can take a few weeks to appear and include itching, irritation and inflammation. You may be able to see: » Black powder (droppings) » Brown eggs » Yellow-grey or red lice 	Often no signs or symptoms. Possible symptoms Stage 1: small, painless, very infectious sore on genitals, anus or mouth. Stage 2: may include painless rash on the palms or soles, wart-like growths on genitals, flu, weight loss, white patches on mouth roof Stage 3: rarely occurs in the UK. Only 1/3 will experience serious symptoms such as paralysis, loss of coordination, blind/deafness, stroke and dementia.	Often no signs or symptoms but if there are, they usually appear within a month. Possible symptoms » Itching, swelling and soreness of the genitals » Frothy, yellow-green fishy vaginal discharge » Thin, white discharge from the penis » Pain during sex and peeing » Lower abdominal pain » Itchy inner thighs » Needing to urinate more often
DIAGNOSIS	Urine or swab test. 	Examination by doctor or nurse. Swab of fluid from the blisters.	Examination by doctor or nurse. 	Urine or swab test.	Blood test, four weeks after exposure will confirm HIV status. Do not delay seeking medical help.	Examination by doctor or nurse with a magnifying glass.	Blood test. Examination by doctor or nurse or swab if there is a sore.	Examination by doctor or nurse. Urine test or swab test.
TREATMENT	Course of antibiotics. Not getting treatment can cause infertility.	Antiviral medicines. Treatment is given to relieve symptoms.	Cream or lotion. Warts can be frozen, heated or removed. It can take months for warts to disappear.	Antibiotic injection in the buttock or thigh and a single antibiotic tablet. Not getting treatment can cause infertility.	Can be managed with drugs. There is no cure but left untreated, can develop into AIDS, when you cannot fight life-threatening infections. PrEP and PEP are drugs that prevent the virus taking hold if you are exposed to HIV.	Special lotions, creams or shampoo. No treatment can cause spreading, skin irritation and infections.	Single antibiotic injection or a course of injections. If reaches stage 3 it can be fatal.	Antibiotics. Unlikely to go away with no treatment. 

Other infections include bacterial vaginosis, cystitis, proctitis, urethritis and vaginitis which can be caused by other STIs but are not themselves, STIs. Find out more at brook.org.uk/stis