

Here to Help!

Condoms and Oral Dams

These are great at helping to protect you from STIs.

Condoms are easy to get, with lots of sizes and even come in a range of flavours for protection during oral sex. You can get up to 144 for \$5 with a script from your Family Planning clinic or doctor. Just make sure you ask at the chemist for a full range of subsidised condoms, so you can check out which style works for you.

Oral dams are a square of latex that goes over the vulva or anus during oral sex. You can get them from a Family Planning clinic or some chemists, or order them through our website.

COMMON STIs	WHAT IS IT?	HOW DO YOU GET IT?	HOW DO YOU GET RID OF IT?
Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea	Bacterial infections. If they are left untreated it could make it difficult for both males and females to have children later on.	Unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex. From mother to baby during birth.	Can be treated with antibiotics. Best not to have sex at all for 7 days after treatment but if you do, you need to use a condom. Your partner needs to be treated too.
Genital Herpes	Viral infection that can cause sores or blisters in or around the vagina, anus or penis.	Unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex. Rubbing against infected areas of someone who has it. From mother to baby during birth. Cold sores on the mouth can also be passed to the genitals through oral sex.	Can be managed, but virus may stay in your body. Tablets can be used to shorten the time you have symptoms or lessen the chance of getting another attack.
Genital Warts	The most common viral infection that can cause small lumps or flat bumps in or around the vagina, penis or anus.	Rubbing against infected areas of someone who has them. Unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex. From mother to baby during birth.	Can be managed, but virus may stay in your body. Special creams or liquid prescribed by the doctor can be used to remove the warts or they may be frozen off.

STIs

Anyone can get an STI, even if it's their first time having sex.

Many STIs have no symptoms, but symptoms can include: pain when going to the toilet or during sex, discharge or unusual smell, lumps, bumps or sores, pain in the lower part of the tummy, sore testicles, itching or bleeding between periods. If something changes you should get it checked out.

There are other STIs that aren't so common such as syphilis and trichomoniasis. There are also very harmful infections that can be transmitted through sex as well as other ways, such as HIV, Hepatitis A, B, and C.

STIs Sexually Transmissible Infections

What is an **STI**?

- STI stands for Sexually Transmissible Infections (they used to be called STDs).
- STIs can be passed by unprotected vaginal, oral or anal sex, or by skin to skin rubbing against infected areas of someone who has an STI (i.e. herpes, genital warts).
- Common STIs include: Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea, Genital Herpes and Genital Warts.



Why test for **STIs**?

- Many people may never know they have an STI and you can't tell just by looking.
- Many STIs can be cured quickly and easily.
- Early treatment can mean fewer symptoms, less pain and less hassle in your life.



When to test for an **STI**

- If you've had unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex.
- Before beginning a new relationship (even if it's just a casual one).
- If the condom ripped (they can give you some tips to make that less likely to happen next time).
- If you are pregnant.
- If you or your partner has symptoms or just feels that something's not right.
- Tests are usually done 2 weeks after unprotected sex.



What happens?

You will be asked a few questions about your basic sexual history like:

- If you've had any symptoms
- If you've had a change in partners
- When you last had sex that you are worried about
- Types of sex you've had
- How long since your last STI check.

The nurse/doctor isn't being nosy and won't judge you! They just need to know what tests you'll need.



Possible tests you may have:

- **Urine test:** pee in a pot.
- **Swabs:** like a cotton bud.
- **Physical Exam:** looking at, or touching, the area for signs.
- **Smear test:** women 20+ years of age who have ever had sex.
- **Blood test** (HIV, Hepatitis B, Syphilis).



What are swabs?

A swab is like a special cotton bud on a long stick, that is used to collect cells or discharge for testing. They can be taken from the outside of the genitals, inside the vagina or anus, or a special, very tiny swab from inside the urethra (pee hole).

Swabs usually don't hurt and only take a few seconds to get.

If you have symptoms, the doctor or nurse may need to look at your genitals.

If you don't have symptoms, you may be able to take the test yourself - the nurse or doctor will explain how.

Tips for testing

Guys – try not to pee for 2 hours before your appointment so the urine test will work better.

Girls – you may want to book a time when you don't have your period, but the test will still work if you do have it.

If you have symptoms, go ASAP. It's much easier to diagnose and stops it from getting worse.

If you're worried or nervous, just ask. The staff will be happy to explain everything.

Myths Busted

There are no little umbrellas or big needles in uncomfortable places! Nothing scarier than a small cotton swab.

People don't need to be sleeping around to get an STI. It only takes one unprotected hook-up.

Condoms don't work - Oh yes they do! It is far safer to use a condom and lube than not to. They offer great protection against STIs **AND** unplanned pregnancies.