

DEFINITION

- Exposure to someone with a sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- Definition of Exposure: Sexual intercourse (oral, vaginal, or anal) with someone who was diagnosed with a STI or has symptoms of an STI.
- The exposed person has NO symptoms of STI. If the patient has symptoms, go to that specific symptom-based guideline.
- STD stands for Sexually Transmitted Disease and means the same thing
- Also Included: STI Prevention
- Included: Questions about the following STIs. If the caller has no STI exposure or symptoms, go directly to "Specific STI Questions" and to the topic in Care Advice.
 1. AIDS (HIV)
 2. Bacterial Vaginosis (not transmitted to males)
 3. Chlamydia
 4. Gonorrhea
 5. Hepatitis B
 6. Herpes Simplex (Genital)
 7. Lice (Genital or Pubic)
 8. Molluscum Contagiosum (Genital)
 9. Monkeypox (not an STI, but can be spread during intimate contact and sex)
 10. Syphilis
 11. Trichomonas Infections
 12. Warts (Genital)
 13. Yeast Infections (Vaginal) (not transmitted to males)

TRIAGE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

See More Appropriate Protocol

Rash or sores on penis or scrotum

Go to Protocol: Penis-Scrotum Symptoms - After Puberty (Pediatric)

Rash or sores on female genital area (vulvar area)

Go to Protocol: Vaginal Symptoms or Discharge - After Puberty (Pediatric)

Go to ED Now

Forced to have sex (sexual assault or rape)

Sexual intercourse (in the past 72 hours) with someone who was diagnosed with or is suspected of having HIV (AIDS)

Go to ED/UCC Now (or to Office with PCP Approval)

Fever and burning (pain) with urination

Unable to urinate for more than 4 hours and bladder feels very full

Constant lower abdominal pain lasting more than 2 hours (Female)

Fever and testicle pain or swelling (Male)

See in Office Today

Burning (pain) with urination

Unexplained lower abdominal pain (Female)

Abnormal color of vaginal discharge (e.g., yellow, green, gray) (Female)

Bad-smelling vaginal discharge (Female)

Pus (white, yellow) or bloody discharge from end of penis (Male)

Testicle pain or swelling (Male)

Rectal discharge or unusual rectal pain or itching

Other symptoms of a STI

See in Office Within 3 Days

Patient is worried they might have an STI BUT NO symptoms

Reason: relieve fear and prevent spread of STD. Caution: avoid intercourse pending appointment.

Sexual intercourse (oral, vaginal, or anal) with someone who was diagnosed with or is suspected of having a STI

Reason: May need testing and expedited partner treatment. Caution: avoid intercourse pending appointment.

Triager thinks child needs to be seen for non-urgent problem

Caller wants child seen for non-urgent problem

Home Care

Preventing Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI), questions about

Specific STI Questions, but no STI exposure or symptoms

Monkeypox questions, but no symptoms

HOME CARE ADVICE

STI Prevention Questions

- General Condom Information:**
 - Condoms are the only effective way to prevent STIs during sexual intercourse.
 - You can also use condoms during oral sex.
- Obtaining a Condom:**
 - Buy latex rubber condoms. Persons who are allergic to latex can use a polyurethane (plastic)

condom. Never use condoms made from animal skins; they can leak.

- You can get condoms at public health clinics (often free), drug stores, supermarkets, and via the internet. You do not need a prescription.

3. **Storing Condoms:**

- Store condoms at room temperature. Avoid extreme heat, extreme cold, or sunlight.
- You might want to keep a condom in your wallet or purse. This way it is ready and available.

4. **Putting on a Condom - Instructions:**

- Hold the condom at the tip to squeeze out the air.
- Roll the condom all the way down the erect penis (Do not try to put a condom on a soft penis).
- If you use a lubricant during sex, make sure it is water-based (e.g., K-Y Liquid, Astroglide). Do not use petroleum jelly (Vaseline), vegetable oil (Crisco), or baby oil. These can cause a condom to break.

5. **Taking off a Condom - Instructions:**

- After sex, hold onto the condom while the penis is being pulled out. This will keep the condom from coming off before the penis is out.
- The penis should be pulled out while still erect, so that sperm (semen) doesn't leak out of the condom.

6. **Female Condoms:**

- There are female condoms (e.g., Reality) that you can also buy without a prescription.
- A female condom is a polyurethane (plastic) sheath that is placed inside the vagina.

7. **United States - STI Hotline:**

- *American Social Health Association* STI Hotline provides information on sexually transmitted infections (STIs), such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, HPV/genital warts, herpes, and HIV/AIDS. Specialists can provide general information, referrals to local clinics, and written materials about STDs and disease prevention.
- Toll-free number (English): **(800) 227-8922**
- Toll-free number (Spanish): **(800) 344-7432**
- Their website is at: <http://www.ashastd.org>

8. **Pregnancy Test, When in Doubt:**

- If there is a chance that you might be pregnant, use a urine pregnancy test.
- You can buy a pregnancy test at the drugstore.
- It works best if you test your first urine in the morning.
- Call back if you are pregnant.
- *Follow the instructions included in the package.*

9. **Call Back If:**

- Pregnancy test is positive or if you have difficulties with the home pregnancy test
- You develop symptoms of a STI
- You become worse

Specific STI Questions

1. **AIDS (HIV) Definition/Symptoms**

- **Cause:** A virus. HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the cause of AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome).
- The virus attacks a person's immune system, eventually making them susceptible to a variety of different infections.
- Symptoms: Flu-like symptoms start in 2-6 weeks. They include fever, sore throat, swollen lymph nodes, rash and muscle pains. These symptoms last 1 to 2 weeks. After many years of silence, the virus attacks a person's immune system (AIDS). That causes fevers, rapid weight loss, chronic diarrhea, pneumonia and many other severe infections.

- **Transmission:** Spread by any sexual behaviors that involve the exchange of body fluids, including vaginal fluids, semen or blood. Also spread by injecting street drugs with dirty (used) needles or syringes. Can be spread from a mother to her baby during pregnancy or delivery, or during breastfeeding.
- The following does **not** transmit HIV: saliva, tears, sweat or urine. It is highly unlikely that a human bite would transmit HIV. Donating blood does not transmit HIV. All donated blood in the USA is screened for HIV so that receiving donated blood is considered safe.
- **Incubation Period:** In 6-12 weeks after exposure the HIV antibody test becomes positive. HIV usually does not cause any symptoms of AIDS for several years (1-10 years).
- **HIV Exposure:** Risk assessment must be done urgently. If high risk for HIV and less than 72 hours since exposure, prophylactic medication may be beneficial.
- **Diagnosis/Testing:** A blood test, usually performed 3 months after exposure if no symptoms. This test may be done anonymously (patient is given the result without his or her name ever being known) or confidentially (through patient's PCP). Anonymous testing sites can be located by calling the CDC AIDS Hotline at 1-800-342-AIDS. Whether done anonymously or confidentially, it is important that the patient share the information with a trusted PCP.
- **Treatment:** There is no current cure for HIV/AIDS. There are many medications that can control HIV and prevent complications. Most patients with AIDS can be kept feeling healthy for many years. All sexual partners should be tested.
- **Call Back If:**
 - Future HIV exposure occurs
 - Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

2. Bacterial Vaginosis (Gardnerella) Facts

- **Cause:** A common vaginal infection in post-pubertal young women. Caused by an overgrowth of certain bacteria in the vagina.
- **Symptoms:** May cause a thin, white vaginal discharge with foul (fishy) odor. Usually doesn't cause itching or pain. May also be asymptomatic.
- **Transmission:** Unclear. Can also occur in non-sexually active adolescents.
- **Incubation Period:** Unknown.
- **Diagnosis/Testing:** A sample of vaginal discharge is examined under a microscope.
- **Treatment:** Oral medication requiring a prescription. Sometimes topical vaginal medication is prescribed. Routine treatment of male sexual partners is not recommended.
- **Prevention of Spread:** This is not a STI. Males do not get this infection, so treatment of male sexual partners is not needed.
- **Call Back If:**
 - Vaginal discharge occurs
 - Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

3. Chlamydia Facts

- **Cause:** Chlamydia bacterium
- **Symptoms:** Chlamydia is usually a cervical infection in women. If a woman is symptomatic, will have a vaginal discharge (often yellow or green). In men, Chlamydia causes urethritis. Men with symptoms will have discharge from penis and/or dysuria. Both sexes can rarely present with eye discharge. Frequently asymptomatic in both men and women.
- **Transmission:** By intercourse (vaginal or anal)
- **Incubation Period:** Varies. Days to weeks.
- **Diagnosis/Testing:** Diagnosed with PCR test on a urine sample or a specimen taken from the urethra or vagina.
- **Treatment:** Antibiotics. Reinfection is common, so sexual partners should be treated. If not treated, can result in significant complications (e.g., pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy, infertility).
- **Prevention of Spread:** Avoid sexual contact until treatment is completed and all symptoms are gone. If unable to avoid sexual contact, always use condoms.
- **Call Back If:**

- Vaginal or penile discharge or dysuria
- Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

4. **Gonorrhea Facts**

- **Cause:** Neisseria gonorrhoeae bacteria.
- **Symptoms:** In women, usually causes a cervical infection. In men, it causes urethritis. In both men and women, can also be an infection of the throat or of the rectum. Symptoms for women may be nonspecific: increased vaginal discharge, abnormal menses (increased flow or dysmenorrhea), dyspareunia (painful intercourse) or dysuria. Many women are asymptomatic. Symptoms in men are urethral discharge and/or dysuria. Most men will have symptoms. Both sexes: Throat infections may cause a sore throat with pus on the tonsils or may be asymptomatic. Eye infections cause a purulent discharge and eye pain.
- **Transmission:** By intercourse (vaginal or anal), or oral sex.
- **Incubation Period:** Usually 2-7 days.
- **Diagnosis/Testing:** Diagnosed with PCR test on a urine sample or a specimen taken from the urethra, vagina, rectum or throat.
- **Treatment:** Antibiotics. Sexual partners should also be treated. If not treated, can result in significant complications (e.g., pelvic inflammatory disease and possible infertility, ectopic pregnancy, and epididymitis in men).
- **Prevention of Spread:** Avoid sexual contact until treatment is completed and all symptoms are gone. If unable to avoid sexual contact, always use condoms.
- **Call Back If:**
 - Vaginal, rectal, or penile discharge or dysuria
 - Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

5. **Hepatitis B (HBV) Definition/Symptoms**

- **Cause:** Hepatitis B Virus (HBV). Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver.
- **Symptoms:** Hepatitis from HBV is a serious illness. However, it affects different people in different ways. Some people have no symptoms. Some people become ill with fatigue, nausea, muscle aches, fevers, yellow eyes, and yellow skin. Some people are never able to completely fight off the infection. These people go on to have chronic hepatitis. Sometimes, people die from hepatitis B.
- **Transmission:** The highest concentrations of HBV are found in the blood. Body fluids with visible blood can also transmit HBV. HBV is present in lower concentrations in semen and vaginal secretions.
- **Safe Body Fluids:** The following body fluids do not transmit HBV: saliva, tears, sweat or urine.
- **How Spread:** HBV can be spread by any sexual behaviors (heterosexual or homosexual) that involve the exchange of body fluids, including vaginal fluids, semen or blood. It also can be spread by injecting street drugs with dirty (used) needles or syringes. Can be spread from a mother to her baby during pregnancy, delivery, or breastfeeding.
- **Incubation Period:** 6 weeks to 6 months.
- **Diagnosis/Testing:** Blood tests.
- **Treatment:** There are several anti-viral drugs for treating hepatitis from HBV.
- **Prevention:** There are two different medicines that are available to help prevent HBV. These are the hepatitis B vaccine and hepatitis B immune globulin.
- **Vaccine:** The Hepatitis B vaccine helps prevent getting HBV in the future. It is
 - recommended for all newborns. It is also recommended for any teen or
 - for any adult at risk for getting HBV. For example, all health care providers should get this vaccine.
- **Immune Globulin:** Hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) is used to prevent HBV after you have been exposed to it. The medical term for this is post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). HBIG is not needed after an HBV exposure if you have already gotten the HBV vaccine.
- **Call Back If:**
 - You are exposed to HBV
 - You think you are pregnant

6. Herpes Simplex (Genital Herpes) Facts

- **Cause:** The herpes simplex virus.
- **Symptoms:** Painful, fluid-filled blisters which usually are grouped in clusters. Occur anywhere around the vagina or on the penis. Blisters dry out, crust over and heal in 7-10 days. With the first episode, the symptoms are worse. Recurrences can occur and are often less painful and of shorter duration.
- **Transmission:** Genital herpes is spread by intercourse (vaginal or anal) or by any direct contact with the genitals of a person who has an active herpes infection (initial episode or recurrence). Oral herpes (fever blisters) can also be spread to the partner's genitals during oral sex.
- **Incubation Period:** 2 days to 2 weeks
- **Diagnosis/Testing:** Genital herpes can be diagnosed with a specimen taken from a blister.
- **Treatment:** Antiviral medication may be used for genital herpes if started within the first 3 days of having the blisters. Medication doesn't cure the disease, but can shorten the duration of symptoms. Sexual partners should be evaluated.
- **Prevention of Spread:** Avoid sexual contact until treatment is completed and all symptoms are gone. If unable to avoid sexual contact, always use condoms.
- **Call Back If:**
 - Blister or sore around the vagina, penis, or anus
 - Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

7. Lice (Genital Or Pubic Lice) Facts

- **Cause:** A parasite, also known as the pubic louse crab louse. Most often infests the genital and anal areas, although other hairy parts of the body may also be involved. The scalp, however, is rarely involved by the pubic louse.
- **Symptoms:** Itching and a rash are common symptoms.
- **Transmission:** Usually is transmitted by sexual contact, but may also be transferred on contaminated items such as clothing and bedding.
- **Incubation Period:** Symptoms of itching may occur 1-2 weeks after contact.
- **Diagnosis/Testing:** Eggs (nits), nymphs and adult lice may be seen with the naked eye. Nits are small, yellowish-white, glistening, oval eggs attached to pubic hair shafts. Lice are grayish-white, oval, wingless insects 1-4 mm in length.
- **Treatment:** Medicines which kill the lice are available over the counter and by prescription. A common brand is Nix. Retreatment is suggested 7-10 days after initial treatment. Bedding and clothes should be machine washed after treatment to destroy all parasites. All sexual contacts within the last month should be treated. Reinfection is possible.
- **Prevention of Spread:** Avoid sexual contact until treatment is completed and all symptoms are gone.
- **Call Back If:**
 - Persistent itching after treatment or presence of new lice/nits
 - Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

8. Molluscum Contagiosum Facts

- **Cause:** A virus.
- **Symptoms:** Flesh-colored round bumps on skin, sometimes with a dimple in the center. Usually asymptomatic.
- **Transmission:** By direct contact with molluscum anywhere on the body. May or may not be sexually transmitted. May also be transmitted on towels.
- **Incubation Period:** A few weeks to a few months.
- **Diagnosis/Testing:** Usually by visual appearance. Sometimes a specimen is squeezed from a lesion and sent to the lab.
- **Treatment:** Medications applied to the surface or "freezing" with liquid nitrogen. Sexual partners should be evaluated and treated if molluscum are present.
- **Prevention of Spread:** Avoid sexual contact until treatment is completed and all symptoms are

gone.

- **Call Back If:**

- Bumps develop, especially around the genitals or inner thighs
- Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

9. Syphilis Facts

- **Cause:** Treponema pallidum bacteria.

- **Symptoms:** Syphilis initially causes a chancre (syphilis sore) which is a superficial skin ulcer on the genitals, anus or mouth. It's usually painless (so it may go unnoticed). Several weeks after the chancre, a viral-like illness with a rash may occur. After 3-6 weeks, the chancre disappears spontaneously, but the person is still infected.

- **Transmission:** Mainly by sexual contact, including vaginal, anal or oral sex. Also by kissing (if the syphilis sore is located in the mouth), or by touching someone's open syphilis sore. Anyone who may have been exposed should have a blood test. (Reason: many infections are asymptomatic.)

- **Incubation Period:** Chancre (sore) develops within 10-90 days (average: 3 weeks).

- **Diagnosis/Testing:** Blood tests and sometimes a specimen taken from an open sore.

- **Treatment:** Antibiotics. Sexual partners should be evaluated and treated. If not diagnosed and treated, syphilis can lead to many complications, including disease of the brain and problems with pregnancy.

- **Prevention of Spread:** Avoid sexual contact until treatment is completed and all symptoms are gone.

- **Call Back If:**

- Sore develops around the genitals or in the mouth
- Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

10. Trichomonas Infections Facts

- **Cause:** Trichomonas vaginalis protozoa.

- **Symptoms:** In women, may cause a foul-smelling, yellow, possibly bubbly vaginal discharge. May also cause vaginal itching and redness, or dysuria. Many women and most men are asymptomatic.

- **Transmission:** By sexual intercourse. Reinfection is common.

- **Incubation Period:** Average: varies from 4-28 days

- **Diagnosis/Testing:** Inspection of a sample of the vaginal discharge under the microscope. May also be found on a PAP smear.

- **Treatment:** Antibiotics. Sexual partners should be treated.

- **Prevention of Spread:** Avoid sexual contact until treatment is completed and all symptoms are gone. If unable to avoid sexual contact, always use condoms.

- **Call Back If:**

- Vaginal discharge develops
- Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

11. Warts, Genital Facts

- **Cause:** Human papilloma virus (HPV). Some types of these viruses also cause nongenital "common" warts on other parts of the body. These are different from sexually transmitted warts.

- **Symptoms:** Warts are skin-colored growths. They may be very flat and unnoticeable or have a cauliflower-like surface. They can grow together and become quite large. Warts can occur anywhere on the genitals of men or women, and on the anus. Most infections are asymptomatic.

- **Transmission:** By intercourse (vaginal or anal) or oral sex.

- **Incubation Period:** Varies from 3 months to 2 years.

- **Diagnosis/Testing:** Usually by visual appearance. Sometimes requires magnification in the PCP's office to be able to see the infection. In women, warts occurring inside the vagina or on the cervix require a pelvic exam for diagnosis.

- **Treatment:** Various. Application of medicines in the PCP's office or "freezing" with liquid nitrogen are the most common. Often requires multiple retreatments over time. Over-the-counter

wart medicines for "common" warts are not effective in the treatment of sexual warts. All sexual partners should be evaluated. (Reason: Reinfection by untreated partners is common.)

- **Prevention:** The Human Papilloma Virus vaccine (HPV) can prevent most genital warts and cervical cancer. Between 15 and 24 years of age, 25% of sexually active teens become infected with HPV. Young girls should be vaccinated before they become sexually active if possible. The target age is 11-12 years. Also recommended for males at the same age.
- **Prevention of Spread:** Avoid sexual contact until treatment is completed and all symptoms are gone.
- **Call Back If:**
 - Warts or other rashes occur in the genital area
 - Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

12. Yeast Infections (Vaginal Yeast) Facts

- **Cause:** A yeast, *Candida albicans*. Not usually considered to be a sexually transmitted disease
- **Symptoms:** Vaginal discharge (often thick and white), vulvar itching, redness, or pain. Also dysuria is possible.
- **Transmission:** Person to person. *Candida* is found everywhere and lives on the skin, in the mouth, in the vagina, and in the intestines of healthy people without causing infection or symptoms. Overgrowth of yeast can occur with diabetes, taking antibiotics and for unknown reasons.
- **Incubation Period:** Unknown
- **Diagnosis/Testing:** A swab taken from the vagina is examined under the microscope or cultured.
- **Treatment:** Anti-yeast medications. Some medications (Clotrimazole and Miconazole) can be purchased over the counter.
- **Prevention of Spread:** This is not a STI. Males do not get this infection, so treatment of male sexual partners is not needed.
- **Call Back If:**
 - Vaginal discharge, pain, or itching develops
 - Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

Monkeypox Questions

1. Reassurance and Education - Monkeypox in Children:

- Monkeypox is extremely rare in children.
- Of all cases in the US, only 1 per 1000 has occurred under age 17 years. Even less common in younger children.
- Children mainly get monkeypox if someone in their home has monkeypox.
- Most worries about children catching monkeypox are not warranted.

2. Monkeypox Disease Facts:

- **Cause:** Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by the monkeypox virus.
- **Spread:** Monkeypox spreads from person-to-person by direct skin contact. For example, spread can occur during intimate contact and sex. While not technically an STI, most monkeypox is occurring in adult men who have sex with other men in current US outbreak. Very rare in children unless household exposure (less than 1% of total cases).
- **Diagnosis:** Suspected by appearance of rash and monkeypox contact. Diagnosis confirmed by lab test on fluid from monkeypox sore. Most testing done through public health department.
- **Incubation period:** Symptoms usually start between 1 to 2 weeks after exposure. Range is from 4 to 21 days.
- **Contagious period:** A person can spread monkeypox from the time symptoms start until all the monkeypox sores have crusted over and fallen off (usually 7 to 14 days).
- **Isolation is Needed:** To protect others, stay at home (isolate) until all of the scabs have fallen off the monkeypox spots and the skin is healing. Avoid close contact with others in your home.
- **Treatment:** Symptoms are treated with home remedies and OTC meds. Prescription

medicines are not needed for most healthy people.

- **Outcome:** Most healthy people do not develop any complications.
- **Vaccine:** There is a vaccine available to help prevent monkeypox in people who are exposed as well as those that are at high-risk.

3. **Monkeypox Rash Appearance:**

- Initial symptoms are fever, headache, muscle ache and swollen lymph nodes. These symptoms last 1 to 5 days. Small sores may appear in the mouth.
- A rash appears about 1 to 3 days after the start of the fever. Sometimes people get the rash first and afterwards other symptoms.
- The rash usually starts on the face, sometimes on the genital area. It spreads quickly within 24 hours to the arms and legs, even the palms and soles.
- Each monkeypox sore is about 0.5 cm to 1 cm wide. Each sore progresses through the following stages: small red spot (macule), small red bump (papule), small water blister (vesicle), small cloudy blister (pustule). Then, the sore crusts over and the scab falls off. The entire process takes about 2 weeks.
- The rash is usually the same size and at the same stage on different areas of the body, unlike chickenpox.

4. **Call Back If**

- Blister or sore around the vagina, penis, or anus
- Female patient misses her period and might be pregnant

FIRST AID

N/A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

General Information

- A sexually transmitted infection (STI) is an infection that is transmitted through sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal, oral).
- It is also sometimes referred to as a sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Examples of STIs include chlamydia, gonorrhea, genital herpes, HIV, pubic lice, and trichomonas.
- Some STIs can be cured with antibiotics (e.g., gonorrhea, chlamydia).
- Some STIs cannot be cured, but the symptoms can be reduced (e.g., herpes, HIV) by taking prescription medications.

Transmission

- Most STIs are transmitted by exchange of body fluids (e.g., semen, vaginal secretions or blood) during oral, anal, or vaginal sex.
- Also can occur following direct contact with any sores/lesions during sex.
- A latex condom acts as barrier and is the only effective way to prevent most STIs.

Abstinence and Other "Safe" Sexual Activities

- There are only two 100% effective means of avoiding STIs: abstinence and monogamy.
- Abstinence means not having sexual intercourse or oral sex.
- Monogamy means having only one sexual partner and neither partner has a STIs.
- Sexual behaviors that are considered safe (and do not usually transmit STIs) include holding hands,

hugging, touching and kissing (as long as there are no sores on the lips or in the mouth).

- Touching semen during mutual masturbation generally is safe.
- Condoms if used properly can prevent most STIs, but not all.

Behaviors That DO NOT Prevent STIs

- Douching the vagina or showering after sex does not prevent STIs.
- Withdrawal (when a man pulls his penis out before he ejaculates) is not a way to prevent STIs or pregnancy.
- Having an STI once does not prevent one from getting it again.
- Using the birth control pill, patch, or shot does not prevent STIs .
- You still need to protect yourself with condoms.

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