

## STD Basics

### Signs and Symptoms

See a Doctor or Clinic if These Symptoms are Present

#### *For Women:*

- Unusual discharge or smell from the vagina
- Burning or itching around the vagina
- Bleeding from vagina not associated with period
- Pelvic pain during sexual intercourse
- Persistent, unexplained pain in pelvic area

#### *For Men:*

- Pus or other discharge from penis

#### *For Both Women and Men:*

- Sores, bumps or blisters on or near the genitals, mouth or anus
- Burning and pain during urination or a bowel movement
- Swelling in the groin (the area around your genitals)

#### **Remember:**

- Many STDs have no signs and symptoms. Sometimes, the symptoms go away but the STD is still present.
- Some people believe that if a blood sample is taken during a visit to the doctor that they are checking for STDs. This may not be true.
- People should talk to their doctors about being tested for STDs if they are at risk.
- Testing for STDs may not be done during routine gynecological exams for women.

## Transmission

Most STDs are Spread by:

- Vaginal sex
- Oral sex
- Anal sex
- Infected mother to newborn

## Complications/Consequences

If left untreated, some STDs can:

- Spread to sex partners or syringe-sharing partners
- Be serious and painful
- Cause permanent damage to reproductive organs
- Lead to infertility in men and women
- Infect newborns, and may lead to serious complications and even death of infants
- Cause heart disease, blindness, arthritis, brain damage or death

## Prevention

- Avoiding vaginal, oral or anal sex is the best way to prevent STDs.
- Limit the number of sex partners.
- Condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are highly effective in preventing transmission of HIV and most STDs.
- Always use condoms during vaginal and anal sex.
- Use a condom for oral sex on a penis.
- Use a barrier (dental dam or condom cut in half) for oral sex on a vagina or anus.
- Notify sex partners immediately if you have an STD.
- Make sure partners are tested and treated at same time to prevent re-infection.
- [CDC Condom Locator](#)  
Search by zip code to find free or low-cost condoms near you.

## Testing and Treatment

- Get a test from a medical provider if infection is suspected.
- Some STDs can be cured using medication prescribed by a medical provider.
- Don't use home remedies.
- [STD Testing](#)  
Find free or low-cost testing near you.

## Notifying Partners

- [Just Diagnosed? Next Steps After Testing Positive for Gonorrhea or Chlamydia \(CDC\)](#)  
If you've just found out that you have gonorrhea or chlamydia, you may be trying to figure out what to do next.
- [What You and Your Partner Should Know about Chlamydia and Gonorrhea](#)  
Information for you and your partner after being diagnosed with chlamydia and/or gonorrhea.
- [STD/HIV Partner Services Program](#)  
The Partner Services Program offers people who have been diagnosed with HIV or an STD free medical, prevention, and other services, including help with partner notification.

### Tags

- [stds](#)

**Last Updated:** 11/07/2022