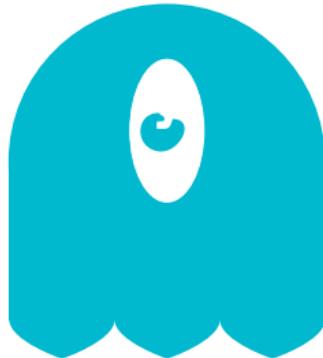
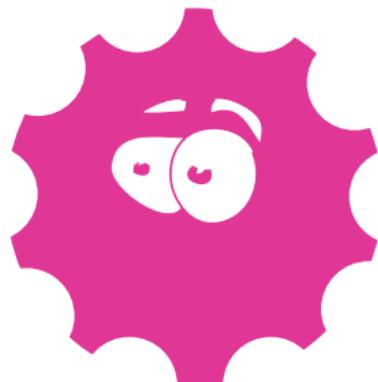
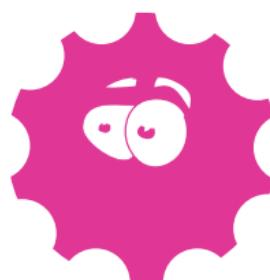
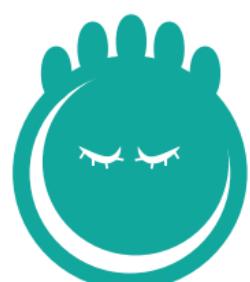
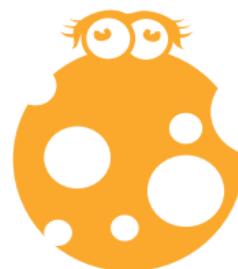
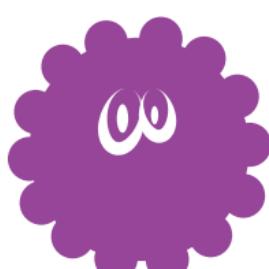
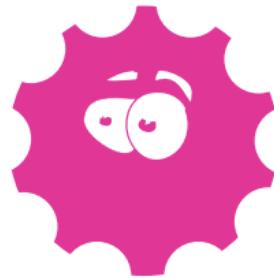
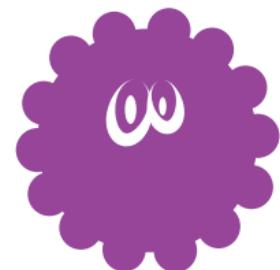
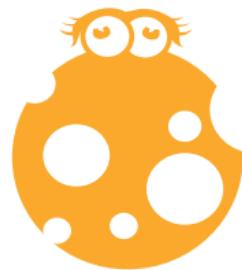


# your best defence



Keeping an eye on STIs



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# let's talk about it

## Healthy relationships

Talking with your partner about sexual health and contraception may seem difficult, but it's an important part of forming healthy relationships.

It's important to discuss if you or your partner have had a sexually transmissible infection (STI) in the past (your sexual history) and it's a good idea for you both to have a sexual health check-up. This is also the time to talk about practising safe sex to reduce your chance of STIs and unplanned pregnancy.

This is part of staying in control of your sex life; it doesn't mean you don't trust your partner, or that you are hiding anything. In a healthy relationship, your partner will respect you for taking care of your health and theirs.

## Sex and Sexually Transmissible Infections

STIs are infections which can be passed from one person to another during sexual activities that involve direct skin-to-skin contact and/or the exchange of bodily fluids.

Like other infections, STIs are caused by organisms such as bacteria, viruses or parasites.

STIs often have no symptoms so you may not know if you or a partner has an STI.

If left untreated, STIs can cause damage to the body and lead to health problems.

It doesn't matter who you are, anyone can get an STI; it can take just one unprotected hook-up.

It's important to know about STIs, even before you become sexually active, so you can protect yourself and your partner and reduce your chance of getting an STI.

**Anyone can get an STI; they are most common in young people aged 15-29 and often have no symptoms.**

**'Sexually active' refers to activities that could put you at risk of STIs or pregnancy.**

## What does 'sexually active' mean?

These activities include:

- vaginal sex (penis in vagina)
- anal sex (penis in anus)
- oral sex (licking, sucking, kissing partner's genitals)
- oral-anal sex (licking, kissing partner's anus)
- manual sex (touching/fingering your partner's vagina, penis or anus)
- naked dry sex (rubbing bodies together without clothes on, but no penetration)
- sharing sex toys

All of these activities can put you at risk of getting an STI.

## Consent

Remember to always gain consent from your partner before any sexual activity.

Consent means that both people want, agree, and feel comfortable with the type of sexual activity they are about to do together.

However, anyone may decide at any time that they want to stop that activity and take away their consent.

If you or your partner says 'no', the other person must respect that decision.

Non-consensual sexual activity is against the law and is classified as sexual assault.

**If you have experienced sexual assault it's important to tell someone. In an emergency situation call 000. To talk to someone about it call 1800 RESPECT 24 hours a day.**

# protecting yourself and your partner from STIs

## Safe sex – your best defence against STIs

The best way to reduce your chance of getting an STI is to have 'safe sex'.

Safe sex means always using a condom or dam for any sexual activity involving vaginal, anal or oral sex. These barrier methods of protection minimise the amount of skin-to-skin contact and stop the transfer of bodily fluids.

Barrier methods of protection include:

- External (Male) Condoms
- Internal (Female) Condoms
- Dams (only used for oral sex)
- Gloves (only used for manual sex – using your hand to touch/finger your partners genitals)

**Preventing an STI is easier than treating an STI.**

Some ways to encourage safe sex with your partner:

- offer to buy condoms together
- buy condoms online
- experiment with different styles, sizes, shapes and flavours of condoms
- involve condoms/dams in foreplay

**Condoms are the only form of contraception that protect against pregnancy and STIs.**



## Safe sex and contraception

Condoms provide protection from STIs and pregnancy when used correctly; however you might like to consider using another form of contraception as well – such as the contraceptive implant ('the rod') or 'the pill' – to further reduce the chance of pregnancy.

**Did you know pre-cum fluid is released from the penis during sexual arousal. Pre-cum has sperm in it and can also contains STIs!**

## You don't have to have sex to be intimate with your partner

There are many ways to be physically intimate with your partner without having vaginal, anal or oral sex. If you don't want to have sex, or don't have any condoms with you, there are safer sexual activities you can do together that have no risk or low risk of STIs and pregnancy.

## Low risk sexual activities

- Kissing, cuddling
- Massage
- Stroking, rubbing, touching
- Mutual masturbation (when touching your own genitals in front of your partner, and your partner touching their own genitals at the same time)
- Dry sex with clothes on (sometimes called 'dry humping')

**Always gain consent from your partner before any sexual activity.**



# external (male) condom

The an external (male) is a thin latex rubber or polyurethane (a type of soft plastic) covering which is rolled onto an erect (hard) penis before having sex.

## How does it protect against STIs?

Worn on the penis during vaginal, anal or oral sex, the external condom provides a barrier which catches semen and stops the transfer of bodily fluids between partners.

Using a water-based lube on the outside of a condom makes it slippery, and also helps stop the condom from breaking – particularly when used for anal sex.

Condoms are the only form of contraception that protects against both pregnancy and STIs.

## Where can I get external condoms?

- Family Planning Australia clinics
- Sexual health clinics
- Youth centres
- Supermarkets
- Pharmacies/chemists
- Vending machines in some public toilets
- Online stores and Freedom Condom

**The average speed of ejaculation is 45kms/hour!**

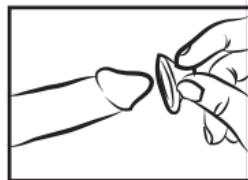
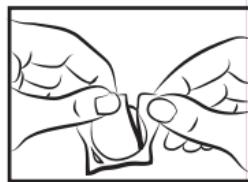


## Tips

- Always use water-based or silicone-based lube. Oil-based lubricants and products (e.g., Vaseline) increase the risk of condom breakage.
- The condom should be put on an erect (hard) penis before any contact between the penis and partner's genitals, mouth or anus.
- There are many brands, sizes and flavours of condoms, so find some that are comfortable and enjoyable for you and your partner.
- Both latex and non-latex condoms are available.
- Vaginal creams (e.g., for thrush) may weaken condoms for up to 72hrs after treatment
- Never put two condoms on at once, as they will be more likely to break.
- Each condom can be used once only.
- Use a new condom when changing between vaginal, anal and oral sex.
- If the condom breaks call Family Planning Australia Talkline 1800 658 886 for advice on STI testing and emergency contraception.

## How to use a an external condom

- Gain consent (don't forget to ask!).
- Check the expiry date.
- Carefully open the condom packet (do not use your teeth or scissors).
- Check the condom is the correct way up.
- Pinch the tip of the condom with one hand (this removes the air and makes space for the semen/cum).
- If you realise the condom is the wrong way and it's touched your penis, dispose of it and use a new one.
- While still pinched, place the condom on the head of the penis when it's erect (hard).
- With your other hand roll the condom down to the base of penis.
- Put some water-based lube on the outside of the condom if you like (recommended during anal sex).
- You are now ready to have sex – check the condom doesn't break or slip down during sex – if this happens, stop and put a new one on.
- After sex, while the penis is still hard, carefully withdraw the penis while holding the base of the condom.
- Remove the condom slowly so it doesn't spill or turn inside out.
- Tie the condom in a knot to keep the fluid inside it.
- Wrap the condom in a tissue and put it in the bin (not down the toilet).



**Condoms can also be used on sex toys. They should be changed when using the toy at different body areas or with different partners to stop the transfer of bodily fluids.**

# internal (female) condom

The internal (female) condom is like a large, loose-fitting external (male) condom made of nitrile (a type of soft plastic), which is inserted into the vagina before having sex.

## How does it protect against STIs?

Worn inside the vagina during vaginal sex, the internal condom provides a barrier which catches semen and stops the transfer of bodily fluids between partners.

The internal condom can also be used during anal sex. When used in this way, the inner ring is often removed.

The internal condom can provide more protection from skin-to-skin transmitted STIs [genital warts (HPV) and genital herpes] than the external condom, as it covers a larger area of the vulva and the base of the penis during vaginal sex.

## Where can I get internal (female) condom?

- Online store
- Some sexual health clinics
- Some pharmacies/chemists
- Online stores

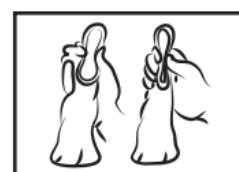
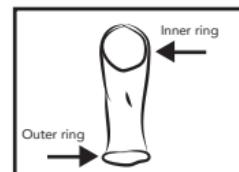
## Tips

- Do not use an internal condom together with an external condom.
- The internal condom is non-latex so can be used by people with latex allergy.
- If the internal condom gets twisted or breaks, remove it and use a new one.
- Each internal condom can be used once only.
- Use a new internal condom when changing between vaginal and anal sex.
- If the internal condom breaks call Family Planning Australia Talkline 1800 658 886 for advice on STI testing and emergency contraception.

**The clitoris is the only organ in the human body with no other purpose than for sexual pleasure!**

## How to use an internal condom

- Gain consent (don't forget to ask!).
- Check the expiry date.
- Carefully open the packet (do not use your teeth or scissors).
- The internal condom has two rings: the outer ring covers the area around the vagina opening, and the inner ring is used for inserting the condom into the vagina.
- Squeeze the sides of the insertion ring together at the closed end of the condom.
- Find a comfortable position to insert the condom (squat, lie down or raise one leg on a chair).
- Gently insert the condom into the vagina like a tampon.
- Using one finger inside the condom, push the inner ring as far as it can go into the vagina, making sure the condom is not twisted.
- The condom is now in place.
- When you are ready, guide your partner's penis into the opening of the internal condom with your hand so it enters correctly.
- After sex, remove the internal condom by twisting the outer ring to stop the sperm leaking out.
- Then gently pull the condom out of the vagina.
- Tie the internal condom in a knot, wrap it in a tissue and put it in the bin (not down the toilet).



# dam

The dam is a thin sheet of latex rubber or silicone that can be used during oral sex (mouth to vagina or mouth to anus).

## How does it protect against STIs?

The dam provides a barrier between the mouth and the vagina or anus, preventing the transfer of bodily fluids between partners.

When used correctly, the dam prevents skin-to-skin contact and can help to reduce the risk of getting STIs such as herpes and genital warts (HPV).

## Where can I get dams?

- Some sexual health clinics
- Some pharmacies/chemists
- Online stores

**Always ask for consent from your partner before you have oral sex.**

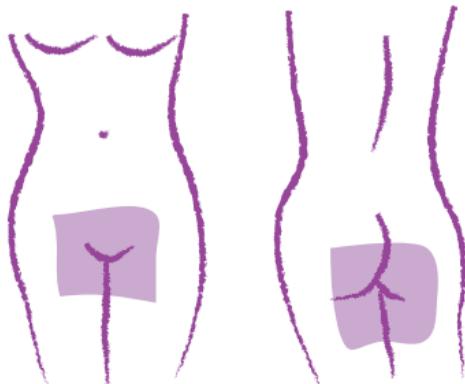
## Tips

- Each dam can be used once only.
- Dams come in different flavours, so find one that you and your partner enjoy.
- Make sure the dam is kept the same way during oral sex – one side in contact with the genitals, the other side in contact with the mouth. If unsure, get a new dam.
- Always use a different dam when switching between mouth to anus and mouth to vagina.
- A water-based lubricant used on the underside of the dam (side in contact with the vagina or the anus) may increase pleasure.



## How to use a dam

- Gain consent (don't forget to ask!).
- Check the expiry date.
- Carefully open the plastic packet (do not use your teeth or scissors).
- Put some water-based lube on one side of the dam if you want.
- Lay the dam flat (lube side down) covering the vaginal or anal area.
- Hold the edges of the dam during oral sex to keep it in place, taking care not to stretch it.
- After oral sex wrap the dam in a tissue and put it in the bin (not down the toilet).



**The dam is not a form of contraception and does not prevent pregnancy. It can only be used for oral sex activities, not for penetrative sex (penis in vagina or anus).**

**Gloves** (latex or polyurethane) can be used as a protective barrier for manual sex (using your hand to touch / finger your partner's genitals); particularly if there are cuts or sores on the hand or if a person has their period.



# **lubricant (lube)**

Lube is a slippery liquid used during sex to make everything nice and wet. This helps to create extra smoothness and increases sensitivity which can make sex more pleasurable.

## **How does it protect against STIs?**

Lube helps to decrease friction during sex. Too much friction during sex can cause chafing and tiny tears in the soft tissue of the vagina and/or anus creating a higher risk of STIs and other infections being passed on.

Lube can help prevent condoms or dams from breaking by making them more slippery.

Always use a water-based lube as this is safe for use with latex condoms and dams.

## **Where can I get lube?**

- Family Planning Australia clinics
- Some sexual health clinics
- Supermarkets
- Pharmacies/chemists
- Online stores

**Using lube  
increases pleasure  
for everyone!**

## **Tips**

- Condoms come pre-lubricated but you can add more lube.
- Never use oil-based lube such as Vaseline or massage oils as these can cause the condom/dam to break.
- There are many types of water-based lube including different sensations and flavours, so find one that you and your partner enjoy.
- Using flavoured lube with condoms/dams can make safe oral sex more pleasurable and fun.
- A small amount of lube goes a long way so you don't need much each time.

## How to use lube

**External (Male) Condom:** When the condom is on the penis, and before having vaginal, anal or oral sex, put some lube on the outside of the condom. Don't put lube on the penis under the condom as it can cause the condom to slip off.

**Internal (Female) Condom:** Lube can be put on the penis before sex using the internal condom.

**Dam:** Apply lube to the underside of a dam (the side in contact with the vagina or anus) during oral sex. You can also add some flavoured lube to the upper side of the dam if you want.

**Glove:** Apply lube to the outside of the glove before manual sex. Lube can also be used during other sexual activities like mutual masturbation and when using sex toys.

**Remember, use  
water-based lube  
(not oil-based) when  
using condoms, dams  
or gloves.**



# sexual health checks

A sexual health check is a check-up by a doctor or nurse for sexual health problems like STIs.

## When do I need a sexual health check?

- If you have ever been sexually active and have not had an STI test.
- If you are starting a new sexual relationship.
- If you have had unprotected sex (without using a condom or dam), including vaginal, anal and oral sex.
- If you have symptoms such as genital discharge and/or itching, pain when you pass urine or during sex, pain low in your abdomen, or irregular bleeding from the vagina – especially after sex.
- If your partner has an STI.
- If you have had a condom break or fall off during sex.
- If you or your partner have more than one sexual partner.
- If you have shared needles for drugs, tattooing or piercing.
- If you and your partner decide to start having sex without using a condom.
- If you are planning a pregnancy or are already pregnant.

## What are the benefits of regular sexual health checks?

- Less stress! Knowing you are taking control of your sexual health.
- Stronger relationship with your partner; trust, communication and respect for each other's body and health.
- Opportunity to talk with your doctor or nurse about contraception and any other sexual health issues.



If you are sexually active, regular sexual health checks are a great idea – even if you've always had safe sex.

### Where do I go for a sexual health check?

- Family Planning Australia clinics
- Sexual health clinics
- Your doctor

### What happens if an STI is left untreated?

Many STIs have no signs or symptoms so you may not know if you or your partner has one.

If left untreated, some STIs can cause chronic pain and/or permanent damage to a person's reproductive system and can result in infertility (not able to make a baby).

Other STIs can cause ongoing irritation and unpleasant symptoms that may keep coming back.

### How much will it cost?

Consultations at Family Planning Australia and sexual health clinics in NSW may be free, bulk billed or you may be charged an out of pocket fee.

It's a good idea to take your Medicare card with you if you have one.

Did you know you can apply for your own Medicare card once you are 15 years old?

For more information go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/medicare-card](http://servicesaustralia.gov.au/medicare-card) or call Family Planning Australia Talkline on 1300 658 886.



## Your privacy

All medical services are private and confidential. Other people can't access your health information without your permission except in extreme situations; for instance, if you are at significant risk of harm to yourself or others.

## What's involved in a sexual health check?

To decide which test/s you may need, the doctor or nurse will ask some standard questions about:

- your general health
- your sexual history (e.g. sexual activities, any previous STIs)
- any signs or symptoms you have experienced
- any medications you may be taking

While some of the questions may seem personal, it's important to be open and honest in your answers. This will allow you to receive the right tests and advice to keep you healthy.

STI testing may include a:

- urine test (pee in a cup)
- blood test
- swab from the back of the throat, tip of the penis or inside the vagina
- swab from a sore and/or blister
- an examination is only recommended if you have symptoms

A blood test for syphilis and HIV is now recommended for everyone as part of a sexual health check.

**A Cervical Screening Test (CST) checks for certain types of HPV that can lead to abnormal cell changes in the cervix (the neck of the womb) which, if left untreated, could develop into cervical cancer. A CST is not an STI test. You can ask to have an STI test done at the same time. Women and people with a cervix, aged 25-74 who have ever been sexually active should have a CST every 5 years. To find out more about cervical screening go to <https://www.fpnsw.org.au/health-information/individuals/cervical-screening>**

## Will it hurt?

STI testing is simple and shouldn't hurt. There may be a bit of discomfort for a short time with some tests.

The doctor or nurse will advise what tests or examination are recommended, and it is your choice what to get. If you don't have any symptoms, you can often collect your own swab or urine tests.

There is no need to be embarrassed or nervous. Doctors and nurses are professionals and do this every day; it's just another part of your body that needs to be kept healthy.

## Telling partners

If you test positive for an STI, it is important to tell your partner/s so they can be checked and treated as well. This is called 'contact tracing' or 'partner notification'.

If you are not comfortable contacting your previous partner/s, your doctor or nurse can help you – whilst respecting your confidentiality and not revealing your name.

For more information about telling partners go to [www.letthemknow.org.au](http://www.letthemknow.org.au)



**The most common STIs in young people are Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Herpes.**

# STIs

There are three main categories of STIs

## 1. Bacterial

- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhoea
- Syphilis

Bacterial STIs are caused by bacteria and can be easily cured with antibiotics (tablets or injection).

## 2. Viral

- Genital Herpes (HSV)
- Genital Warts (HPV)
- HIV
- Hepatitis B
- Mpoxy

Viral STIs are caused by viruses and there are treatments available to manage the symptoms.

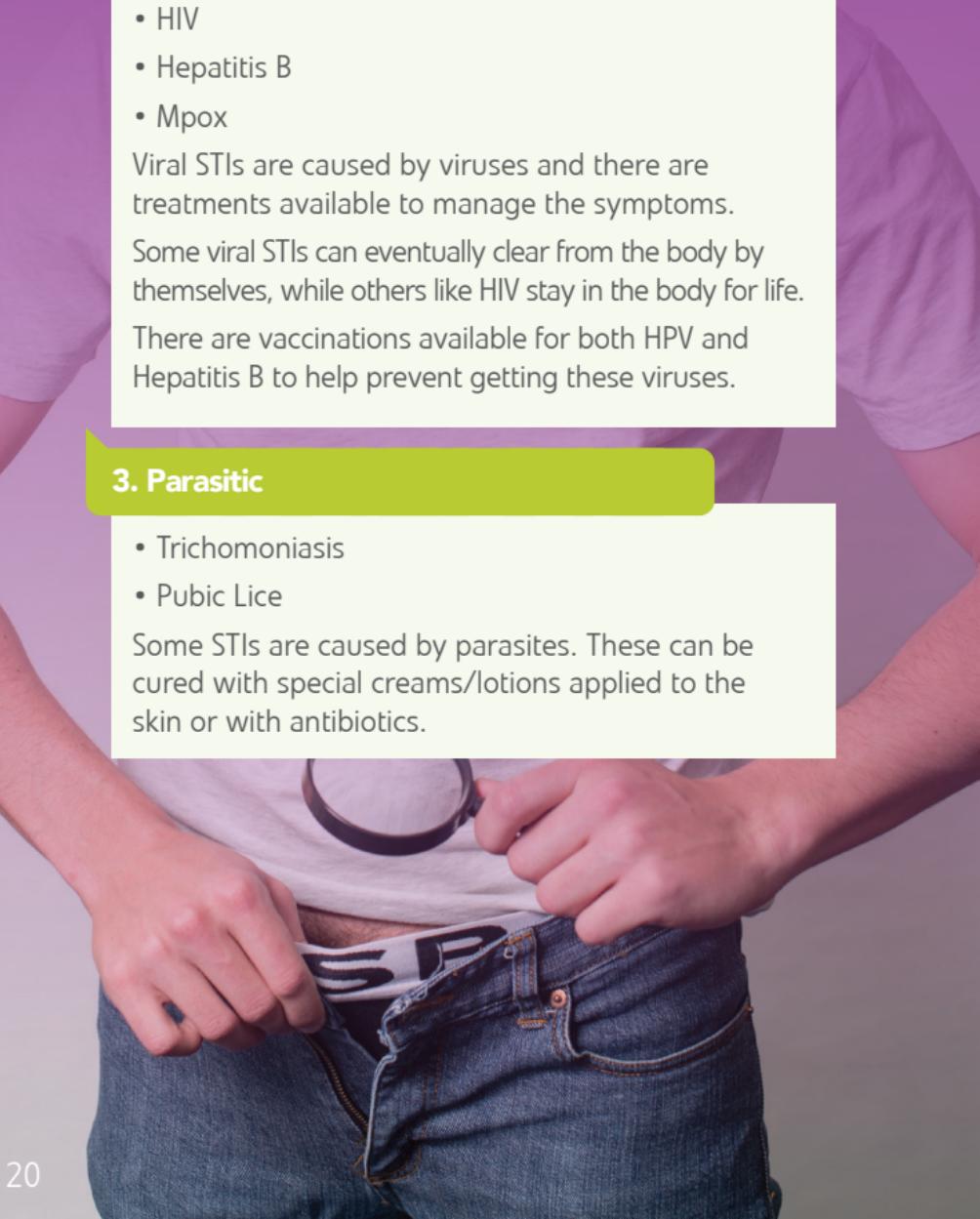
Some viral STIs can eventually clear from the body by themselves, while others like HIV stay in the body for life.

There are vaccinations available for both HPV and Hepatitis B to help prevent getting these viruses.

## 3. Parasitic

- Trichomoniasis
- Pubic Lice

Some STIs are caused by parasites. These can be cured with special creams/lotions applied to the skin or with antibiotics.





# Chlamydia

(Clam-id-ee-a)

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection that can infect the reproductive organs. Less commonly, it can infect the throat, and anus.

## How is it passed on?

- Unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex
- Sharing sex toys

## Symptoms

Usually no symptoms, but may include:

- unusual discharge (fluid) from the penis, vagina or anus
- pain during sex
- pain when peeing
- bleeding in between periods or after sex
- lower abdominal or testicular pain
- rectal pain, discharge, or bleeding.

## How is it tested?

- Urine test (pee in a cup) and/or
- Swab test from the vagina, anus or throat

## How is it treated?

- A course of antibiotic tablets.
- Your sexual partner/s will need to be tested and treated to avoid re-infecting each other.
- Avoid having sex for seven days after you have both been treated to prevent getting the infection again.
- A follow-up test in three months' time to make sure you haven't got the infection again.

## How can I prevent getting it?

- Use a condom during vaginal, anal or oral sex and when sharing sex toys.

**Chlamydia is the most common STI among young people in Australia.**

**Chlamydia is known as the 'silent infection' as most people have no signs or symptoms.**



# Gonorrhoea (Gon-or-ee-a)

Gonorrhoea is a bacterial STI that can infect the reproductive organs. It can also infect the urethra (tube you pee through), mouth, throat and anus.

## How is it passed on?

- Unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex
- Sharing sex toys

## Symptoms

Often no obvious symptoms, but may include:

- pain/burning feeling when peeing
- unusual discharge (fluid) from the vagina, penis or anus
- pain during sex
- conjunctivitis (eye inflammation)
- bleeding in between periods or after sex
- lower abdominal pain or testicular pain
- rectal pain, discharge, or bleeding

## How is it tested?

- Urine test (pee in a cup)  
and/or
- Swab test from the vagina, anus or throat

## How is it treated?

- An antibiotic injection and antibiotic tablets.
- Your sexual partner/s will need to be tested and treated to avoid re-infecting each other.
- Avoid having sex for seven days after you have both been treated to prevent getting the infection again.
- A follow-up test of cure in two weeks' time is recommended.
- A follow-up test in three months' time is recommended to make sure you haven't got the infection again.

## How can I prevent getting it?

- Use a condom and/or dam during vaginal, anal or oral sex and when sharing sex toys.



# Syphilis (Sif-ill-is)

Syphilis is a bacterial infection that infects the penis, vagina, throat and anus. It travels in the blood stream and can cause serious health problems throughout the body if not treated.

## How is it passed on?

- Unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex
- Direct skin-to-skin contact, especially when sores or rashes are present
- Sharing sex toys
- Pregnancy/childbirth – infected mother to baby

## Symptoms

Often only mild or no symptoms, but may include:

- a painless sore in or around the mouth and/or penis, vagina, or anus
- in later stages, a rash can develop on the upper body, palms of the hand or soles of the feet. If syphilis is untreated, it can progress to disease of the nervous system, heart or blood vessels.
- syphilis in pregnancy can lead to a severe infection in the baby called congenital syphilis.

## How is it tested?

- Blood test

## How is it treated?

- Antibiotic injections – the sooner you get treated, the less treatment needed.
- Avoid having sex until your doctor says your treatment has been successful.
- Your sexual partner/s will need to be tested and treated to avoid re-infecting each other.
- Follow-up blood tests to ensure the infection is gone.

## How can I prevent getting it?

- Use a condom and/or dam during vaginal, anal or oral sex and when sharing sex toys.
- Use a latex glove during manual sex.
- Avoid contact with any sores and rashes.
- No sexual contact with anyone diagnosed with syphilis (not even using a condom) until after their treatment has finished.



# Genital Herpes (HSV)

Genital herpes is a common STI caused by the Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV). There are two types: Type 1 was traditionally associated with infections around the mouth (cold sores) and Type 2 with genital infections (genital herpes). However, both types are now causing genital herpes.

## How is it passed on?

- Direct skin-to-skin contact – including vaginal, anal or oral sex

HSV can be passed on even when there are no visible sores/symptoms.

## Symptoms

Often no symptoms, but may include:

- stinging or tingling in the affected area around the genitals
- painful blisters or itchy sores on the genitals
- pain when peeing
- flu-like symptoms (tiredness, muscular aches, swollen glands)

If symptoms do occur, they usually only last for about a week but they can come back.

## How is it tested?

- Physical examination of blisters or sores
- Swab test from a blister or sore

## How is it treated?

- Antiviral tablets can sometimes be helpful
- Mild pain relieving medication
- Creams to soothe irritation
- Salt water bathing

## How can I prevent getting it?

- Avoid vaginal, anal or oral sex if blisters or sores are present – the virus is most infectious at this point.
- Use a condom and lube, and/or dam during vaginal, anal or oral sex (condoms will reduce risk although they only protect the area being covered).
- If your partner has had genital herpes, using antiviral tablets may help reduce transmission.



# Genital Warts (HPV)

Genital warts are caused by some types of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).

## How is it passed on?

- Direct skin-to-skin contact – including vaginal, anal or oral sex

HPV can be passed on even when there are no visible warts or symptoms.

## Symptoms

- Small lumps (warts) anywhere on the genitals (internally and/or externally), and/or in throat or mouth.

The lumps may be itchy but are not usually painful. They may take months to appear or, if internal, may not be easily visible.

## How is it tested?

- Physical examination for visible warts on the skin around the genitals and anus.

## How is it treated?

- Warts may disappear within a couple of years without any treatment.
- Visible warts can be treated with a special cream (available from your doctor).
- Some warts may be removed by your doctor using freezing or burning treatment/s.

Although treatment can remove the physical signs of the virus, it may take longer before the virus is completely removed from the skin cells and the warts may come back.

## How can I prevent getting it?

- The HPV vaccination (Gardasil) can protect against two types of HPV that commonly cause genital warts and another seven types that may cause cervical cancer (and some other cancers).
- Use a condom and/or dam during vaginal, anal or oral sex (condoms/dams will reduce risk although they only protect the area being covered).



# HIV

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that damages the body's immune system making it hard to fight off infections in the body. If untreated, HIV can develop into AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

HIV lives in four kinds of bodily fluids:

- blood
- semen (cum, including pre-cum)
- vaginal fluid
- breast milk

## How is it passed on?

- Unprotected anal or vaginal sex
- Sharing sex toys
- Sharing needles/drug injecting equipment
- Non-sterile (unclean) tattooing and body piercing equipment
- HIV infected mother to baby during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding

## Symptoms

Many people with HIV don't show symptoms for many years. The only way to tell if you have HIV is to get tested.

Some symptoms after the first few weeks of infection may include:

- flu-like symptoms (tiredness, muscle aches, fever)
- night sweats
- rash
- swollen glands

## How is it tested?

- Blood test

An important benefit of getting tested is early diagnosis, which enables early treatment.

## How is it treated?

- If found early, antiretroviral treatment can slow the infection and delay or prevent the development of AIDS.
- Antiretroviral treatment improves health and wellbeing and can also prevent transferring HIV to others.
- Your sexual partner/s will need to be tested and advised of treatment or prevention options.

## How can I prevent getting it?

- Use a condom during vaginal or anal sex and when sharing sex toys.
- Never share needles or other injecting equipment.
- Only have tattooing and piercing done by licensed, trained professionals.
- HIV viral load means the amount of HIV that is detectable in the blood. People with HIV who are on treatment and have an 'undetectable viral load' (UVL) cannot transmit HIV to others through sex. As long as they keep taking their treatment, the level of virus can be kept low enough to prevent it being passed on to another person (Undetectable = Untransmittable, or U=U).
- Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a medication which can prevent HIV. PrEP may be taken by HIV negative people considered to be at risk of getting HIV, such as a partner of a person with HIV, men who have sex with men, bisexual or trans people.
- Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) can help prevent HIV infection if taken within 72 hours after being exposed to the virus. If you think you may have been exposed to HIV, contact your local sexual health clinic, hospital accident and emergency department or the PEP NSW hotline 1800 PEP NOW (1800 737 669).

### You cannot get HIV from:

- **physical contact such as hugging, shaking hands, toilet seats, or sharing utensils, cups and glasses**
- **bodily fluids such as saliva, sweat or tears**
- **insect or mosquito bites**



# Hepatitis B (Hep B)

Hepatitis B is an infectious virus that can cause serious disease of the liver. Hep B is found in blood as well as semen, vaginal fluid and saliva.

## How is it passed on?

- Unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex
- Sharing personal items e.g. toothbrushes, razors, sex toys
- Sharing needles or injecting equipment
- Non-sterile (unclean) tattooing or piercing equipment
- Pregnancy/childbirth – infected mother to baby

## Symptoms

Often none, but symptoms within 3 months may include:

- feeling like throwing up (nausea)
- flu like symptoms (fever, extreme tiredness, stomach pain)
- urine or faeces (poo) can be a strange colour
- skin and eyeballs can look yellow (jaundice)
- not feeling very hungry

## How is it tested?

- Blood test

## How is it treated?

**There is a combined Hep A /Hep B vaccination. Talk to your GP or sexual health clinic for more information.**

- Most people will recover without treatment – just with rest, plenty of fluids and no drugs or alcohol.
- A very small number of people will continue to have the infection and can have serious health problems. They will need regular monitoring and may be recommended antiviral treatment.

## How can I prevent getting it?

- Get vaccinated against Hep B.
- Use a condom during vaginal, anal or oral sex and when sharing sex toys.
- Never share needles, injecting equipment or personal items.
- Tattooing/piercings done by licensed, trained professionals.
- If you have been exposed to Hep B and are not vaccinated, an injection from your doctor may help to prevent infection.



# Trichomoniasis

(Trike-o-moan-eye-a-sis)

Trichomoniasis is an infection caused by a microscopic parasite in the vagina or urethra (tube you pee through). This is not usually a very common infection.

## How is it passed on?

- Unprotected vaginal sex
- Shared sex toys that have been in contact with bodily fluids

## Symptoms

Often no symptoms but may include:

- frothy, yellow-green discharge (fluid) from the vagina
- unpleasant vaginal odour (smell)
- irritation – itching/burning in the vagina
- pain/burning feeling when peeing

## How is it tested?

- Swab test from the vagina or penis
- Urine sample

## How is it treated?

- A single dose of antibiotic tablets.
- Sexual partner/s will need to be treated at the same time.
- Avoid having sex while you are taking the antibiotics and for seven days after you have both been treated to prevent getting the infection again.

## How can I prevent getting it?

- Use a condom during vaginal, anal or oral sex and when sharing sex toys.



# Mpox

Mpox is an infection caused by the monkeypox virus. Since May 2022, cases have increased globally, including in Australia. Most Mpox cases are mild, but people with weakened immune systems may experience more serious illness. Anyone can get Mpox, however in NSW, men who have sex with men are currently most at risk.

## How is it passed on?

- Vaginal, anal or oral sex
- Direct skin-to-skin contact, especially when sore or rashes are present
- Sharing towels, sex toys, or sleeping in the same bed as an infected person
- Respiratory droplets (e.g., coughing, sneezing) although this is rare
- Mpox infected mother to baby during pregnancy or childbirth

## Symptoms

People may experience all or only some of the symptoms:

- Flu-like symptoms (tiredness, muscle or joint aches, fever, swollen lymph nodes, headache)
- Painful rash which can change to appear as pimples, blisters or sores or scabs which may occur anywhere on the body, including genitals, anus, or inside the mouth
- Pain and/or bleeding from the anus

## How is it tested?

- Swab tests from the affected areas

**Note:** Screening when a person has no symptoms is not recommended.

**If you think you have symptoms of Mpox, call your doctor or local sexual health clinic as soon as possible.**

## How is it treated?

- Supportive treatments may be offered including pain relief, antibiotics for secondary skin infections.
- Antiviral medications may be prescribed for those with, or at risk of, severe infection.
- Most people recover on their own within 2–4 weeks with rest, hydration and over-the-counter pain medication.
- Use a condom for at least 8 weeks after recovery to reduce the risk of passing the virus to sexual partners.

## How can I prevent getting it?

- Mpoxy vaccination (JYNNEOS) is recommended for sexually active gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, as well as anyone at higher risk of exposure. It may also be used for contacts after exposure to Mpoxy to reduce the chance of transmission.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has Mpoxy or shows symptoms.
- Avoid any contact with sores or rashes.
- No sexual contact with anyone diagnosed with Mpoxy (not even using a condom) until they have recovered.

**Got questions about  
Mpoxy? Call the NSW  
Sexual Health Infolink  
on 1800 451 624.**



# Pubic Lice (Crabs)

Pubic Lice are insects shaped like tiny crabs. The female lays eggs (nits) on the base of hairs which hatch and the lice cling to the hairs.

They live in body hair, mainly around the genital area, and feed on human blood.

## How is it passed on?

- Close body contact
- Sharing clothing, towels or sleeping in the same bed as an infected person

## Symptoms

- Severe itching
- Rash on genital area
- Visible eggs or lice on hairs
- Powdery black droppings in your underwear or bed

**Lice can live up to 30 days on the human body and up to 24 hours on clothes or bed linen.**

## How is it tested?

- Physical examination for eggs or lice

## How is it treated?

- Special lotions available from your local pharmacy or doctor.
- Sexual partner/s need to be treated at the same time.
- Sometimes a second treatment is required one week later.
- Avoid having sex for 7 days after treatment or until symptoms have gone away.
- Other household members will need to check themselves and be treated if needed.
- Clothes, towels and sheets need to be washed in hot water on the day of treatment.

## How can I prevent getting it?

- Avoid sexual activity with infected partners.

**Shaving the pubic hair will not remove all the lice as they can burrow into the hair follicles.**

# The Freedom Condom project

freedom  
condom

The Freedom Condom project is a friendly, confidential way for young people in New South Wales to get **FREE** condoms and lube.

When you first sign up, you'll do a short module about consent, STIs and contraception.

After that, you can order free condoms and lube anytime, delivered discreetly to your door.

You can also grab free condoms and lube from any Family Planning Australia clinic or youth service that's a Freedom Condom promoter.

To learn more or to find your nearest promoter, visit:

**[www.freedomcondom.org.au](http://www.freedomcondom.org.au)**



# HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR BODY?



**Body Talk** has you covered. It's a fun, interactive website where you can learn about the changes happening in your body, get info on relationships, and understand your sexual health. Everything is explained in a way that helps you make confident, healthy choices.

Explore topics like:

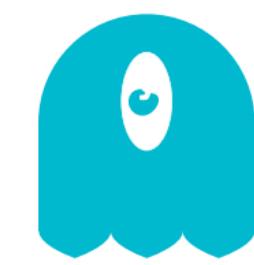
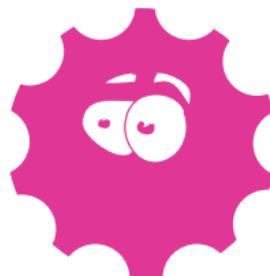
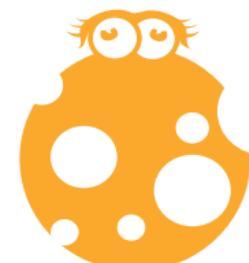
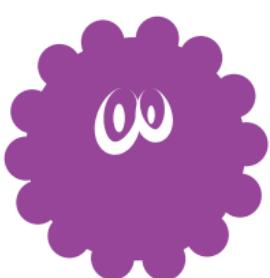
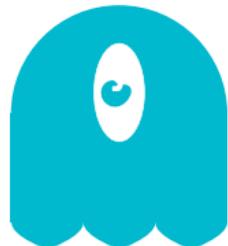
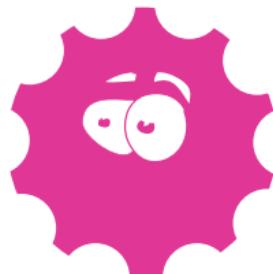
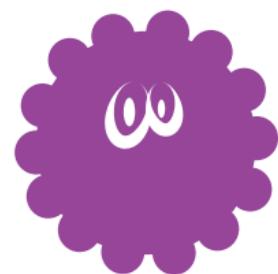
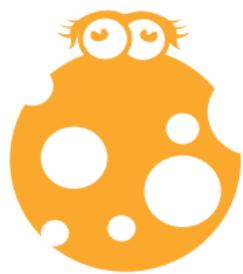
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- Reproductive anatomy
- Gender and sexuality
- Relationships and communication
- Sexual health and well-being
- Contraception
- Sexually transmissible infections (STIs)

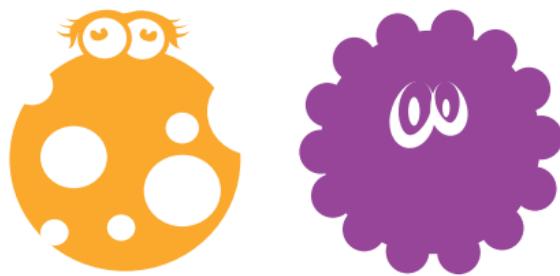
**BODY  
TALK**

Visit [Bodytalk.org.au](https://Bodytalk.org.au)  
or scan here.



**Body, relationships and  
sexual health info you  
can trust.**





## contact us

Family Planing Australia specialises in sexual health information and services for everyone. Our friendly doctors and nurses have up-to-date information on STIs. They can advise you about methods to help prevent contracting STIs, and of the best treatment options if you do have an infection. For more information about sexual health and STIs:

**Visit BodyTalk**

**BODY  
TALK**

[www.bodytalk.org.au](http://www.bodytalk.org.au)

**Call the Family Planning Australia  
Talkline**



Reproductive & Sexual Health | Information & Referral

**Visit the Family Planning Australia  
website:**

[www.fpnsw.org.au](http://www.fpnsw.org.au)

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