

# Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)



## What is an STI?

An STI is an infection that you get from someone else by having sex. You can get an STI by having vaginal sex (penis in the vagina), anal sex (penis in the rectum), or oral sex (penis in the mouth or mouth on the vagina).

## Are STIs common?

STIs are the second most common infections in the United States and Canada. (The most common is a cold.) More than a million people each year get STIs.

## I have only had sex with one partner. Do I have to worry about STIs?

Anyone who is having sex can get an STI. It is true that if you have only one partner during your life, you are at less risk. But it is important to remember that you never know for sure if your partner has other partners. When you have sex with someone, it is as if you are having sex with everyone your partner has ever had sex with.

## Is AIDS an STI?

HIV/AIDS is an STI, and it is very dangerous. But there are many other STIs that are much more common, and some of them are very dangerous too.

## What are the most common STIs?

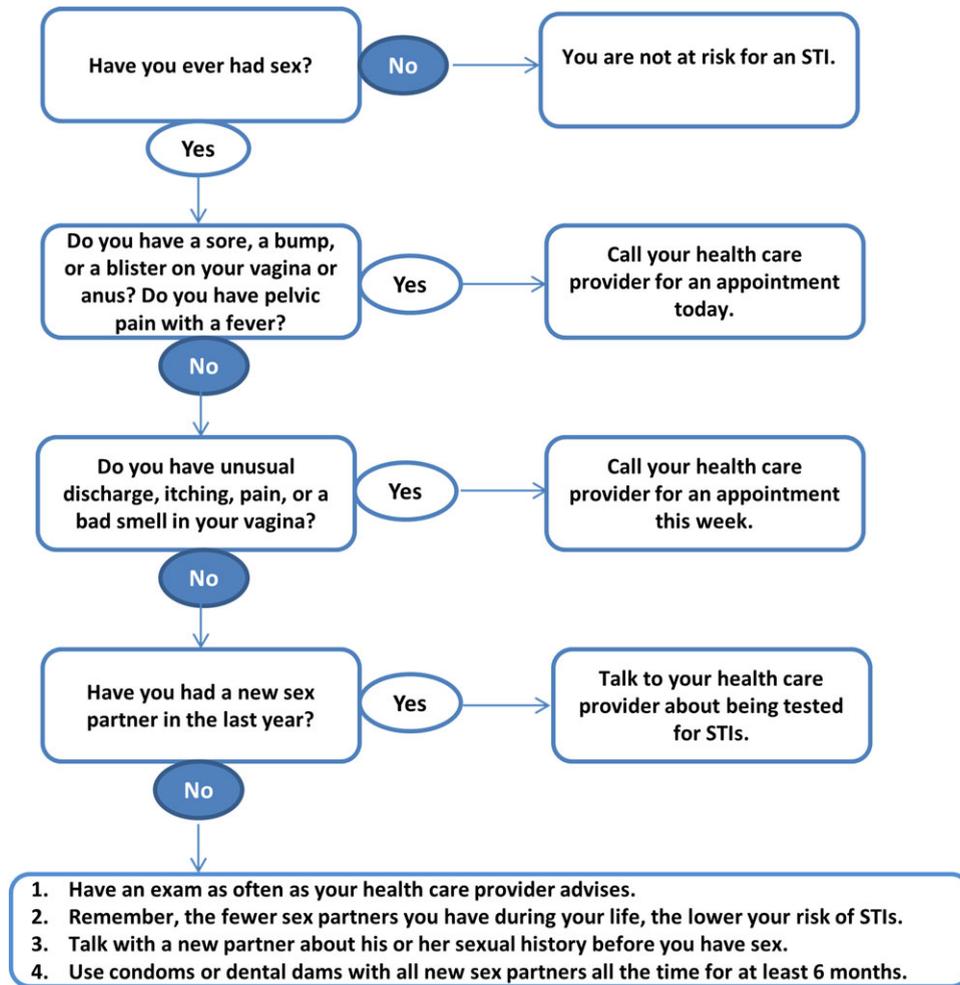
Chlamydia is the most common STI in the United States. Most women have no symptoms and do not know when they have chlamydia. If chlamydia is not treated, it may cause an infection in the pelvic organs called pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can cause very bad pain during the illness and problems getting pregnant or having a normal pregnancy in the future. Chlamydia can be cured. Both you and your partner will have to take medicine.

Trichomoniasis, or “trich,” is another common STI. You may have a bad-smelling discharge, and your private parts may itch or burn. Some women have no symptoms. Trich can be cured easily if both you and your partner take medicine.

Herpes is caused by a virus. About 1 in every 6 adults has genital herpes. The first outbreak of herpes may cause painful, burning sores on your vagina or anus as well as fever, headaches, and painful urination. There is no cure, but there are medicines that can prevent outbreaks and keep you more comfortable when you have an outbreak.

Genital warts may show up as bumpy growths on your vagina or anus. Genital warts are caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV). Most people who have sex will get HPV at some point in their lives. For women, the biggest concern is that some kinds of HPV cause cancer of the cervix. Having a Pap test can help to prevent problems with cancer of the cervix, and—if necessary—you can have the bumpy growths removed.





### For More Information

#### The American Social Health Association

<http://www.ashastd.org>

#### Centers for Disease Control

<http://www.cdc.gov/std>

CDC National STI Hotline: 800-232-4636 (English and Spanish).

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