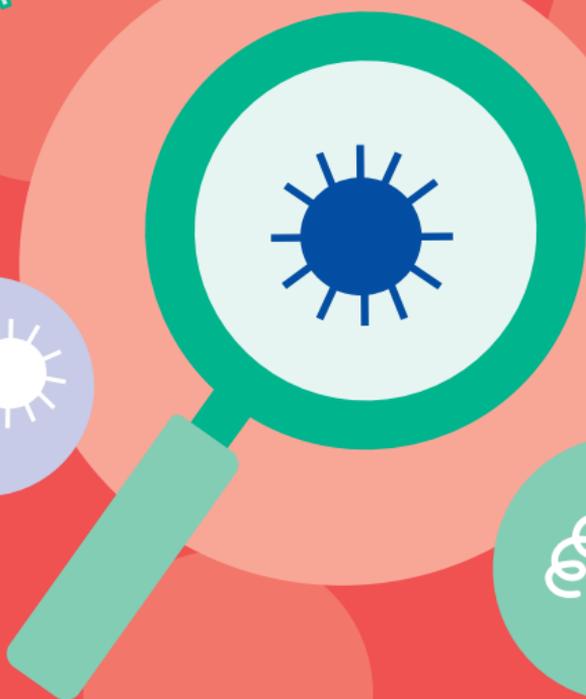
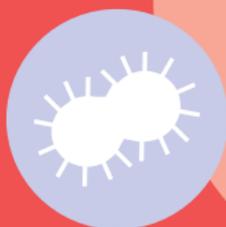




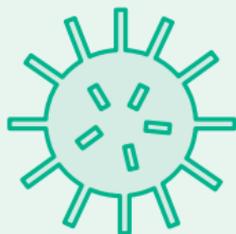
Care
Education
Advocacy

Spotlight on STIs

**The most common
symptom is no symptom.**



Genital Herpes



What is genital herpes?

Genital herpes is one of the most common STIs. It is caused by either herpes simplex virus (HSV) type 1 or type 2. HSV-1 infects both the mouth and genitals. HSV-2 usually infects the genitals but can infect the mouth.

What are the symptoms?

Many people with HSV-1 or HSV-2 don't know they have the virus because they don't have symptoms. Some symptoms include:

- One or more painful sores (blisters, ulcers, or lesions) in the genital area (including buttocks, anus, and upper thighs) or on the mouth
- Redness, itching, tingling, or burning on the genital skin or in the vagina, penis, or anus
- Splits or cracks in the genital skin or on the mouth
- Difficulty or pain (discomfort, stinging or burning) while peeing
- Pain during sex
- Fever or flu-like illness

Why is it so important to get tested?

A new infection with genital herpes or untreated genital herpes during pregnancy can cause health complications, particularly in the last three months of pregnancy.

Having genital herpes sores (blisters, ulcers or lesions) can increase the risk of getting or spreading other STIs. There is very effective treatment to control the symptoms of genital herpes.

How is the test taken?

If you have sores your health practitioner can examine your body and use a cotton swab to collect a sample to determine if it is HSV type 1 or type 2.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV)



What is Human Papillomavirus (HPV)?

Most sexually active people will be infected with at least one type of HPV in their lifetime. There are more than 200 types of HPV and around 40 types can infect the genital area. At least 14 genital HPV types are higher-risk and in rare cases can cause cancer.

What are the symptoms?

Most people will have no symptoms, even with pre cancer of the cervix. Symptoms may include:

Low-risk HPV

If you have been exposed to low-risk HPV you might have genital warts with symptoms such as:

- A flesh-coloured lump or several lumps in the genital area
- Unusual itching or pain in the genital area
- Abnormal or irregular bleeding from the vagina or anus (especially after sex)
- Pain during sex

High-risk HPV

If you have been exposed to high-risk HPV and have a cervix you might have symptoms such as:

- Abnormal bleeding or spotting from the vagina (especially in between menstruation or after sex)
- Pain during sex

Why is it so important to get tested?

Although most HPV infections are cleared by the immune system within two years, untreated high-risk HPV infections can lead to cancer. As these infections typically present no symptoms, screening is crucial for anyone with a cervix who has ever had sex and is aged 25 years or older. HPV during pregnancy usually doesn't cause health complications for you or the pregnancy.

How is the test taken?

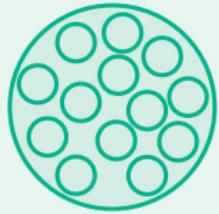
Low-risk HPV

Genital warts are diagnosed by a doctor or nurse, who will examine any lumps.

High-risk HPV

Only people with a cervix can be tested for high-risk HPV. This is done with a cervical screening test.

Chlamydia



What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common STI caused by bacteria. It can infect the cervix, urethra, rectum, throat and occasionally the eyes. It can affect anyone who is sexually active.

What are the symptoms?

Most people with chlamydia do not have any symptoms.

Symptoms may include:

- Smelly or unusual discharge (fluid) from the vagina, penis, or anus
- Abnormal or irregular bleeding from the vagina (especially after sex)
- Difficulty or pain (discomfort, stinging or burning) while peeing
- Redness at the opening of the penis
- Pelvic (lower abdomen), testicular and/or rectal (anal passage) pain
- Pain during sex
- Conjunctivitis (eye infection)

Why is it so important to get tested?

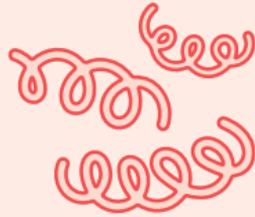
Chlamydia can cause health complications if not treated. Untreated chlamydia could lead to:

- Infertility (inability for you or your sexual partner/s to become pregnant)
- Passing the infection to your sexual partner/s — even if you do not have symptoms
- Increased risk of getting or spreading other STIs
- Infection of a baby during pregnancy or birth

How is the test taken?

Testing for chlamydia is simple. Usually, a urine sample is self-collected, or a cotton swab is used to collect a sample from your vagina, penis, anus and/or throat. You may be able to self-collect your sample.

Syphilis



What is syphilis?

Syphilis is a bacterial STI that can affect anyone who is sexually active. Congenital syphilis occurs when an infected pregnant person passes the infection to their baby during pregnancy or at birth.

What are the symptoms?

Many people with syphilis do not experience any symptoms and may not know they have it. There are three stages of syphilis infection. Each of these stages is associated with different symptoms.

Symptoms may include:

- The appearance of a chancre (sore) – you may not notice the chancre as it is often painless and might be on a hidden part of the body.
- Rough, red, spotty rash usually on the back, chest, hands and feet.
- Fever, tiredness, headache and/or sore throat.

These symptoms will usually resolve without treatment, but the infection can persist and the infected person can infect sexual partners or pass the infection on to their baby during pregnancy or birth. Congenital syphilis can lead to severe complications including miscarriage, stillbirth and serious health issues in babies.

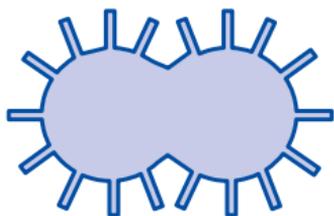
Why is it so important to get tested?

The number of people infected with syphilis is increasing. There has been a rise in congenital syphilis cases and some deaths among infected babies. Syphilis can be easily treated with antibiotics. Treating a pregnant person will prevent congenital syphilis in their baby. Without treatment, tertiary syphilis can occur years after the initial infection and may lead to diseases in multiple organ systems, including the brain, eyes, heart, liver, bones and/or joints.

How is the test taken?

Testing for syphilis involves a blood test taken at a clinic. If you experience symptoms, your doctor or nurse will conduct a physical examination. If you have any chancres, your doctor may perform a swab test.

Gonorrhoea



What is gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is an STI caused by bacteria. It can infect the cervix, urethra, rectum, throat and occasionally the eyes.

What are the symptoms?

Most people with gonorrhoea do not have symptoms. Symptoms may include:

- Unusual discharge (fluid) from the penis, vagina or anus
- Abnormal or irregular bleeding from the vagina (especially after sex)
- Pain, discomfort, stinging or burning while peeing
- Pelvic (lower abdomen) pain
- Pain during sex
- Conjunctivitis (eye infection)

Why is it so important to get tested?

Gonorrhoea can cause health complications if not treated. Untreated gonorrhoea could lead to:

- Infertility
- Passing the infection to your sexual partner/s – even if you do not have symptoms
- Increased risk of getting or spreading other STIs
- Infection of a baby during pregnancy or birth

How is the test taken?

Testing for gonorrhoea is simple. Usually, a urine sample or a cotton swab is used to collect a sample from your vagina, penis, anus and/or throat. You may be able to self-collect your sample.

To learn more or for a list of other common STIs and blood-borne viruses, visit shvic.org.au/stis-and-bbvs

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