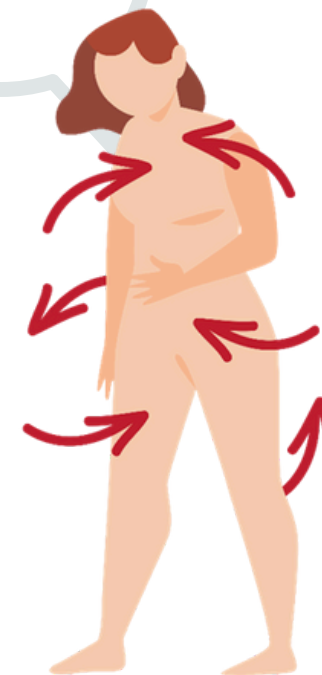


SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

How do I know if I have an STI?

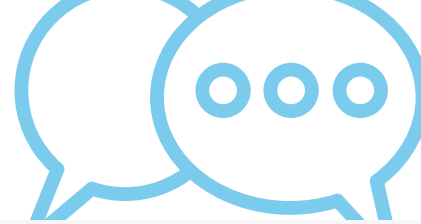
KEY WORDS

symptoms | infections | healthcare



Spotting a sexually transmitted infection (STI) early is super important for getting the help you need fast. That's why knowing what symptoms to look out for and how testing works is key for maintaining your sexual health.

STI symptoms can range from **mild to severe** — and they can affect different parts of the body. After contracting an STI, it may take days, weeks, months, and sometimes years for symptoms to show up. However, in some cases, **STIs may appear with no symptoms**, which may occur with chlamydia, hepatitis B and HPV (for men). Even with no symptoms, STIs, **if left untreated, can spread to others**.



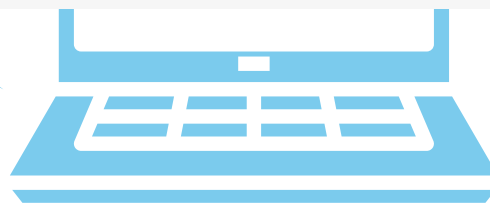
Here are the main **symptoms** to watch out for which may occur for different STIs:

- Pain when urinating or having sex
- Unusual discharge from the vagina, penis, or anus, or even darker urine
- Itchiness around the genitals
- Bleeding between periods or after sex
- Small blisters or sores around the genitals
- Pelvic and testicular pain

So, if something seems off, it's always smart to chat with a healthcare provider.

Getting tested regularly for STIs is super important, especially if you're having sex with a new partner. Testing is done by giving a blood, urine, or swab sample, depending on the type of STI. To learn more about the different types of STIs, we have that topic for you here.

Blood tests are used to detect viral infections like HIV, herpes, and syphilis. **Urine tests** assess the presence of bacterial infections like chlamydia and gonorrhea.



If privacy is a concern for you, in many places you can even get home testing kits for some STIs. However, these kits might not catch everything, so it's always best to follow up with a doctor to be sure.

Catching any issues early means you can start treatment right away and stop them from spreading.

Learning about STIs, safe sex, and regular check-ups helps you take charge of your sexual health, keeping you and your community safe and healthy. Stay informed and take care of yourself!



**SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED
INFECTIONS**

