

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

How do people contract STIs?

KEY WORDS 

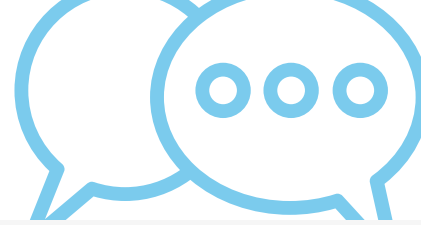
unprotected sex | transmission | condoms | virus



First off, what's the deal with STIs and why should you care? STIs, or sexually transmitted infections can affect anyone's life, regardless of age, gender, or sexual orientation. Understanding STIs is crucial because they can have serious consequences if left untreated, including impacting your overall health, fertility, and well-being. Being aware and informed can help you make safer choices, protect your health, and ensure your relationships are healthy and respectful.

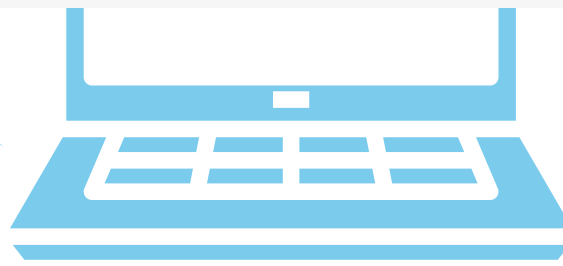
How do STIs spread?

STI's aren't only spread through sexual and close, personal contact. They can also travel non-sexually, through ways like blood transfusions or shared needles, even from mother to child during childbirth or breastfeeding.



Let's have a closer look at the several ways of STI transmission:

- **Unprotected sex:** The top way STIs are spread is through unprotected sex. This means having vaginal, anal, or oral sex without using a condom.
- **Multiple sexual partners:** Having multiple sexual partners increases the risk of exposure to STIs. The more sexual partners someone has, the greater the chance of coming into contact with an infected person.
- **Inconsistent condom use:** Condoms are effective in reducing the risk of many STIs. They can drastically cut your risk, but only if you use them right and every single time. To better find out how to use condoms correctly, you can head over to our topic “What are the different forms of birth control and how can I use them?” ([link](#))
- **Skin-to-skin contact:** STIs like herpes and HPV can be transmitted through skin-to-skin contact with infected areas, even if there are no visible symptoms.
- **Beyond the bedroom:** Blood transfusions, shared needles, and even childbirth can be non-sexual pathways for STIs. When it comes to sharing needles, some STIs, such as HIV and hepatitis, are transmitted this way. For instance, tattoos and piercings with unclean equipment can be risky. That's way it's super important to always check for clean, professional practices to ensure safety.



So, how can you prevent these risks?

Knowledge is power! Preventing STIs is about making informed choices.

Best practices to follow are: consistently and correctly using condoms, making smart decisions about sexual partners, and having regular health screenings. And if you ever think you've been exposed or notice something off, getting to a healthcare provider as soon as possible is your best course of action. They can help stop the spread and manage any infections early on.

Remember, knowing about STIs and how to prevent them is a big step toward taking care of yourself and others!



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