

Sexually Transmitted infections Screening

What are sexually transmitted infections? — Sexually transmitted infections, often called STIs, are infections you can catch during sex. They are also called sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs. Some STIs are caused by bacteria, and others are caused by viruses.

The most common STIs include:

- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhea
- Genital herpes, also called “herpes simplex virus” or “HSV”
- Genital warts, also called “human papillomavirus” or “HPV” – Some types of HPV can cause cervical cancer in women.
- Hepatitis A, B, and C
- Syphilis
- Trichomoniasis
- Human immunodeficiency virus, also called “HIV” – This is the virus that causes AIDS.

Many of these infections can be transmitted through any type of sex. That includes not just penis-in-vagina or penis-in-anus sex, but also oral sex and other types of sex play. HIV and hepatitis can be transmitted in other ways, too, such as exposure to body fluids.

What is STI screening? — STI screening includes a series of tests that doctors use to find out if a person has any STIs. STIs often don’t cause any symptoms. People can have STIs and not know it. That’s what makes screening so important.

Doctors recommend that people who are at risk for STIs be screened even if they have no symptoms and feel fine. For example, you could be at risk for Chlamydia if you had unprotected sex with a new partner. Screening for Chlamydia will alert your doctor that you have this infection. Treatment will prevent the infection from getting worse and keep you from infecting other people.

There are different types of tests that screen for different infections. Many STIs can be found through a blood or urine test. If you decide to be screened for STIs, your doctor or nurse can work with you to figure out which specific tests you need.

Who should be screened for STIs? — Different screening tests are appropriate for different people, depending on their gender and sex habits.

- All men and women (including teenagers) should get screened for HIV.
- Women who have had sex without a condom or who have had sex with more than 1 partner should be screened every year for gonorrhea and chlamydia.
- Women ages 21 to 29 should have a Pap test every 3 years to screen for cervical cancer. Cervical cancer is caused by infection with some forms of HPV. Women ages 30 to 65 can continue having a Pap test every 3 years or they can switch to having a Pap test plus an HPV test every 5 years. Screening after age 65 depends on past test results.

Men who have had sex without a condom or who have had sex with more than 1 partner should be screened every year for chlamydia

- All men and women who are having sex and either do not have a stable partner or are having sex with more than 1 partner should get screened for hepatitis B.
- All men and women born between 1945 and 1965 should be screened for hepatitis C. Also, anyone who has had sex with a person infected with hepatitis C should be screened.
- Pregnant women should be screened for syphilis, chlamydia, HIV, and hepatitis B. Some pregnant women might also need to be screened for other infections depending on their sex habits.
- Men and women who are infected with HIV should be screened at least once for hepatitis A, B, and C. They should also be screened at least once a year for syphilis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea.
- Men who have sex with men should be screened at least once for hepatitis A, B, and C. They should also be screened at least once a year for HIV, syphilis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea.

The list above includes some general guidelines, but some people might need other screening tests depending on their sex habits and other factors. If you are unsure whether you should be screened and for what, ask your doctor or nurse for advice.

Can STIs be prevented? — There is no surefire way to prevent all STIs, but there are things you can do to reduce your chances of catching 1.

- The most important thing you can do is to wear a condom every time you have sex. Both male and female condoms can protect against STIs. But be aware that male condoms made out of “natural materials,” such as sheep intestine, do NOT protect against STIs.
- Ask your doctor if there are any vaccines you should have. If you are 26 years old or younger, you can get a vaccine to protect against HPV, the virus that causes genital warts. If you do not have hepatitis A or B and have not already gotten the vaccine for hepatitis A or B, you can get those vaccines, too.
- If your partner has herpes, he or she can reduce the chances of infecting you by taking a medicine called [valacyclovir](#) (brand name: Valtrex).

If you are at very high risk of catching HIV, you might be able to take a pill every day to reduce the chances that you will get HIV. This is an option only for very few at-risk people. If you are interested in this, talk to your doctor

Now we can screen Chlamydia and Gonorrhea infection by urine test called **Nucleic Acid amplification test. You don't have to do cervical swab screen. Ask your Doctor for further information.**

Source : Uptodate