

Sexually transmitted infections

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A sexually transmitted infection (STI) is an infection that is passed on through close body contact or sex.

Even if you do not notice any changes in your body, it's still possible that you could have an STI without knowing it. Some of the more common [STIs](#) [1][Sexually Transmissible (or Transmitted) Infection] Infections spread by the transfer of organisms from person to person during sexual contact. Also called venereal disease (VD) (an older public health term) or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). include herpes, genital and anal warts, hepatitis A and B, crabs (pubic lice), gonorrhoea, syphilis, and Chlamydia.

If you are HIV positive, it's advisable to take extra care of your health, including trying to protect yourself against STIs. As with any infection that places stress on the immune system, an STI can allow HIV to produce more copies of itself with the result that more damage occurs to the immune system.

Prompt detection and treatment of curable infections such as Chlamydia and gonorrhoea will remove extra stress from the immune system and allow it to function as well as possible to control HIV.

Among people with HIV, some STIs can cause more severe symptoms, and be more difficult to treat. For example: Syphilis can progress to severe symptoms more rapidly, and genital warts and herpes may be more [resistant](#) [2] HIV which has mutated and is less susceptible to the effects of one or more anti-HIV drugs is said to be resistant. Herpes outbreaks can also be more frequent. If you have herpes, consider discussing herpes suppression therapy with your doctor.

Some STIs make it easier to transmit HIV to a negative partner, even when you have no symptoms. If you are sexually active, you should have regular sexual health check-ups. Extra check-ups are advised if you experience any rash, sores, irritation, or genital discharge following sexual contact.

Condoms can protect you from most, but not all STIs so even if you always use condoms having regular checks should be discussed with your doctor. As a general guide the more partners you have the more often you need checkups.

[Transmitting and preventing HIV](#) [3][up](#) [4][Coping Strategies: Time passes](#) [5]

- [sexually-transmissible infections](#)

Links:

[1] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/188>

[2] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/109>

[3] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/next-steps/transmitting-and-preventing-hiv>

[4] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/next-steps>

[5] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/next-steps/coping-strategies-time-passes>