

RESPECT

Love. Life. Others.



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

What is an STI?

Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) is an infection that is spread during sex (vaginal, oral or anal). STIs are very common and most are treatable. Untreated STIs can be painful and can result in serious illness and infertility and increases your risk of HIV infection.

Common STIs include:

English:	Also known as:
Chancroid	Sekamokada
HIV	Kokoana-hloko ea HIV
Syphilis	Mokaola
Genital herpes	Liso tse maqhanyatsa botoneng kapa botsehaling (mashoa)
Gonorrhoea	Seso se rothang
Chlamydia	Seso se setala se lekoeba
Hepatitis B	E iponahatsa ka mahlo a masehla
Genital Warts	Litatamoloko botoneng kapa botsehaling (mahae)
Inguina bubo	Litsoelesa

What puts me at risk of contacting an STI?

- ✓ Being sexually active
- ✓ Having sex without a condom

How can I reduce my risk of contracting an STI?

- 1) Abstinence is the ONLY way to ensure that you will not contract an STI including HIV.
- 2) If you are sexually active you and your partner should be tested for HIV and STIs.
- 3) Be faithful to your partner. Know his or her sexual history.

- 4) Consistently use condoms and avoid unprotected sex with someone who has symptoms of an STI or who may have been exposed to a STI. **Every** time you have sex use a **NEW** condom and follow the instructions in the pack.
- 5) Delay early sexual activities. If you have not started having sex, waiting to have sex with reduce your risk of getting infected with HIV or any other STI.

How do I know if I have an STI?

Symptoms of STI's include:

- ✓ Pus or smelly fluids coming out of the penis or vagina.
- ✓ Blisters, sores or warts on the vagina, penis or anus.
- ✓ Itching or redness on or around your vagina or penis.
- ✓ Unusual swelling near the penis or vagina.
- ✓ Pain in the lower abdomen
- ✓ Pain or burning when urinating
- ✓ Pain in the testicles
- ✓ Pain during sex

Some STI's do not have any symptoms, especially in women. If you are sexually active, you should get tested regularly for STI's. The **ONLY** way of knowing if you have an STI is by being testing at a hospital or clinic.

What should I do if I think I have an STI?

- ✓ See a doctor, or go to a clinic or hospital for examination and treatment. Don't just hope the STI will go away. It won't.
- ✓ Most STI's can be treated. Follow the doctor's orders and complete the full course of medication that is prescribed. Do not share your medication with others.
- ✓ Avoid sex, especially without a condom, while being treated for an STI and until the treatment is completed.
- ✓ If you are pregnant, seek treatment for the STI right away. this will help to avoid passing the infection onto your baby.
- ✓ Tell all current and past sexual partners and urge them to get a check-up.

Why should I tell my partner if I have an STI?

Telling your partner(s) that you have an STI, especially HIV, may be difficult or embarrassing but it is extremely important. Talk to your nurse or counsellor about how to tell your partner.

Telling your partner(s) will enable them to get checked at a clinic or hospital and treated if necessary.

Telling your partner(s) helps to prevent the spread of STI's unknowingly from one person to another.

I am in the army and have a girlfriend who visits me sometimes. I think she may be having sex with another man and am afraid to ask her. Is it possible for a woman to have an STI and not show any symptoms?

Yes, frequently STIs do not have any symptoms in women. If you suspect that your partner is not being faithful it is important that you:

- ✓ Encourage your partner to test for STIs and HIV by suggesting you both go for a test.
- ✓ If an STI is diagnosed follow the correct and complete course of medication prescribed by your doctor.
- ✓ Use a condom.