

STI - Sexually Transmitted Infections

S=Sexually • T=Transmitted • I=Infections

Trichomoniasis - This STI causes pain and itching around the vaginal area and changes in vaginal discharge. Symptoms for men include pain following urination and ejaculation. It is mostly easy to treat with antibiotics.

Pubic lice - Public lice are also known as 'crabs'. These insects suck the blood from their hosts and cause itchiness with red spots in the area. They are simple to treat with medicines that can be obtained over the counter at most pharmacies.

Scabies - This is a condition of the skin in which tiny bugs make their way under the skin causing severe itching. While it is an STI scabies can also be contracted by having long periods of skin contact with an infected person. It is easy to treat

Prevention of STI's

- Abstinence (waiting for the right age, time, person or for marriage to become sexually active)
- Consistent and correct condom use (Condoms can protect one from unwanted pregnancy and STI's including HIV)

Causes of STIs

An STI is an infection that is passed from one person to another through sexual activities such as;

- Oral sex (stimulation of your partner's genitals with your mouth, lips and/or tongue)
- Sexual intercourse (sex)
- Skin-to-skin contact

Common STIs

Chlamydia - Chlamydia is one of the infections that do not display symptoms in most people. However, it can cause pain during urination and unusual discharge or vaginal bleeding. It is easy to diagnose and treat chlamydia. However, if left untreated, it can impact very negatively on one's health.

Genital Warts - Genital warts present as little bumps or growths in the genital and/or anal area of your body. They are relatively easy to treat with creams and a type of treatment called cryotherapy, which freezes the warts off.

Genital herpes - This is one of the most common STIs in South Africa, with approximately one in five people being infected with it. This infection is caused by a virus, which is inactive for the majority of the

time. However, herpes sufferers can experience bursts of painful sores or blisters in the genital area from time to time. Many people do not realise just how serious herpes is. It is the leading cause of genital ulcer disease worldwide and may increase the risk of HIV transmission. Unfortunately, there is no cure for herpes.

Gonorrhoea - Gonorrhoea is a bacterial infection. Symptoms of this STI include unusual discharge and painful urination. It is easy to diagnose and treat, however if left untreated it can cause serious health problems and even infertility.

Syphilis - Syphilis is one of the more complex STIs in terms of symptoms as it initially presents with a painless sore on the genital or around the mouth, which typically lasts for two to six weeks. It then causes skin rash and a sore throat, both of which may then stop after a number of weeks. It is fairly easy to treat but can be extremely dangerous if left untreated. Long-term conditions of syphilis can include blindness, paralysis, stroke and even death.

HIV - Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is one of the more commonly known STIs and one of the most dangerous. HIV wears down your immune system so that your body is unable to fight against other infections and cancers. While there is no cure for HIV it can be successfully treated, enabling those who are HIV positive to have long and fulfilling lives. However, if left untreated it leads to a range of painful symptoms and ultimately death.

HPV - While human papillomavirus (HPV) is one of the lesser-known STIs in South Africa, research suggests that over 85% of women in the country have been exposed to it. HPV can lead to some serious health conditions. There are over 100 types of HPV, some of which cause genital warts and several of which cause cancer of the cervix and increase the risk of anal and penile cancers in men. There is no cure for HPV, however it can be treated and vaccines are available to prevent the contraction of the most dangerous types of HPV. It is recommended that all young girls, even those who are not yet sexually active, have the vaccine, as it is most effective when administered during adolescence. It is also beneficial for boys to have this vaccine as it can help to protect their health as well as prevent the spread of HPV.



Centre for the study of Aids

Visit the CSA above Oom Gert's on University of Pretoria's main campus

<http://www.facebook.com/csaup?fref=ts> • <http://www.csa.za.org/>

(012) 420 4391/5876

Student Health Services, 25 Roper Street, Private Bag X20, Hatfield 0028, Republic of South Africa

Tel: (012) 420 2500, Fax: (012) 420 2503, www.up.ac.za