

# Student Health Centre

Sexually Transmissible Diseases



# What are Sexually Transmissible Diseases?

Sexually Transmissible Diseases (STD's) are infections and diseases, which can be passed on from one person to another during sexual contact. They are caused by bacteria, viruses and other microscopic organisms, which are present in the blood, semen, body fluids or the pubic area of an infected person.



## Who can get infected?

Anyone, male or female that is sexually active is at risk of getting a sexually transmissible disease, including HIV. Young adults between 15 and 19 years of age often have high rates of STDs due to their frequent and multiple casual sex partners. Anyone can become infected from a single sexual contact with an infected person.

## What are the symptoms of STD infection?



Some infections lie dormant in the body for months without any visible signs, therefore many sexually transmissible diseases have no signs or symptoms. However, if you are sexually active and notice any of the following conditions you should contact your Doctor or local STD clinic immediately.

- Pain when passing urine**
- Unusual discharge from penis or vagina**
- Pain during intercourse**
- Unusual sores or blisters in the genital area**
- Itching or irritation in the genital area**

## How can infection with STD's be avoided

### **Abstinence**

Abstaining from sex altogether is a certain way of avoiding infection.

### **Faithful relationships**

Both partners remaining sexually faithful (assuming that neither person has been previously infected)

### **Limit partners**

Although a once only contact can be the source of infection, the more partners the greater the risk of catching an infection.

### **Use of condoms**

Proper use of good quality condoms will significantly reduce the risk of becoming infected.

### **Avoiding misuse of alcohol and drugs**

Alcohol and other drugs impair judgement and reduce the ability to make safe decisions.

High-risk activities also include tattooing and earpiercing with unsterilised equipment and sharing needles during intravenous drug taking.

### **What to do if you think you are infected**

If infection is suspected, it is imperative to seek help from a Doctor or STD clinic as early as possible. Once diagnosed, most STD's can be cured with treatment (with the exception of aids). If left untreated serious and permanent health problems can develop such as chronic pelvic infection, malignant conditions, infertility and ectopic pregnancy.

### **STD Clinics**

St.James Hospital, Dublin 8 Tel: 4537941 Ext. 2315/2316 - Mater Misericordiae Hospital, Dublin 7 Tel: 8301122 Ext.2063  
Baggot St .Clinic, 19 Haddington Rd., Dublin 2 Tel: 6681577

If you have any concerns or require any further information or advice please contact Michelle or Orlagh at the student Medical Centre.