



Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

Disclaimer: This content is provided for general information and education purposes only and does not take into account individual circumstances. It is not to be relied on in substitution for specific advice from a medical professional and Family Planning Tasmania does not accept responsibility for such use. Family Planning Tasmania has taken every effort to ensure that the information is up to date and accurate, however information and knowledge is subject to change. Family Planning Tasmania advises that you always consult a medical professional for individual advice.



What is an STI?

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are infections passed from one person (who has one or more STIs) to another person during sexual contact. This can include oral, vaginal or anal contact.

Groups of STIs

STIs can be divided into two groups, Group A and Group B.

Group A STIs can be treated and cured. However, you will not have an immunity and may be reinfected if you are exposed again.

Group B STIs are viral, which means that although we can treat you for the symptoms, you cannot be cured of them with medication.

Common STIs, their symptoms and treatments are included in tables in the following pages.

Chlamydia

Other names	The Clam
Group A or Group B?	Group A
How do you get it or pass it on?	Sexual contact
Male/Female/Both	Both
Symptoms	Often asymptomatic (no symptoms) Discharge Pain when urinating (weeing) Pelvic pain Pain during sex
Outcomes if untreated	Can lead to Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) Can lead to infertility in women
Treatment	Antibiotics
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners
Other information	Most common STI in Australia



Non-Specific Urethritis

Other names	NSU
Group A or Group B?	Group A
How do you get it or pass it on?	Sexual contact Sometimes non-sexual contact
Male/Female/Both	Male
Symptoms	Can be very mild so may be hard to notice Discharge Pain when urinating (weeing) Pelvic pain Pain during sex
Outcomes if untreated	Can spread to prostate or testes Can lead to infertility in extreme cases
Treatment	Antibiotics
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners

Gonorrhoea

Other names	The Clap
Group A or Group B?	Group A
How do you get it or pass it on?	Sexual contact
Male/Female/Both	Both
Symptoms	Often asymptomatic (no symptoms) Discharge males and females Pain when urinating (weeing) in males Pelvic pain in females Abnormal bleeding in females
Outcomes if untreated	Can lead to Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) Can lead to infertility
Treatment	Antibiotics
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners



Trichomoniasis

Other names	Trike, Trich, TV
Group A or Group B?	Group A
How do you get it or pass it on?	Sexual contact
Male/Female/Both	Both
Symptoms	Females: 50% are asymptomatic (no symptoms) Some may experience smelly discharge Males: Most are asymptomatic (no symptoms) A few may experience discharge
Outcomes if untreated	Can increase risk of getting HIV (if you are exposed to HIV while you have trike) Can lead to pregnancy complications (if women have trike during pregnancy)
Treatment	Antibiotics
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners

Pubic Lice

Other names	Crabs
Group A or Group B?	Group A
How do you get it or pass it on?	Sexual contact Close personal contact Sharing personal items like clothing, bedding and towels
Male/Female/Both	Both
Symptoms	Small grey/brown mites that attach to the base of public hair and cause itching
Outcomes if untreated	Can cause skin infections
Treatment	Foam, shampoo or cream available over the counter at pharmacies
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners and close personal contacts
Other information	Can travel to other parts of the body like armpits and eyebrows/lashes

Syphilis

Other names	Lues, The Pox
Group A or Group B?	Group A
How do you get it or pass it on?	Sexual contact
Male/Female/Both	Both
Symptoms	Initially a painless sore which will heal Six weeks to six months later and coppery-red rash along with fever and feeling ill, which will also pass
Outcomes if untreated	If not treated in the early stages it will attack the internal organs: liver, lungs, heart and brain. Any damage to the body cannot be repaired.
Treatment	Antibiotics
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners
Other information	You can be infectious for the first two years of the disease

Genital Herpes

Other names	Herpes, Herps, The Gift that Keeps on Giving
Group A or Group B?	Group B
How do you get it or pass it on?	Skin to skin contact
Male/Female/Both	Both
Symptoms	Can be asymptomatic (no symptoms) May start as a tingling feeling then small painful blisters on and around your genitals appear, dry and then heal. Further outbreaks may occur over time and usually happen when you are sick or under stress.
Outcomes if untreated	Herpes is uncomfortable and often causes embarrassment, but the worst outcome from remaining undiagnosed and untreated is that you will continue to pass it on to others.
Treatment	Anti-viral medication
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners
Other information	You are infectious even when you don't have blisters or sores. Condoms and other barrier protections do not always protect against herpes. It is caused by the Herpes Simplex Virus.



Genital warts

Other names	HPV
Group A or Group B?	Group B
How do you get it or pass it on?	Skin to skin contact
Male/Female/Both	Both, although progression to cervical cancer only occurs in people with a cervix (women)
Symptoms	Can be asymptomatic (no symptoms) Small bumps on the penis or vulva, or may be in the vagina or anus Bumps can be flat, or cauliflower-like Usually painless but may cause discomfort Further outbreaks may occur over time and usually happen when you are sick or under stress
Outcomes if untreated	Genital warts can cause discomfort and embarrassment. If left untreated some types of HPV can cause changes to the cervix (in people who have a cervix) and may result in cancer. This type of HPV does not cause visible warts so regular Cervical Screening Tests are very important
Treatment	Freezing with dry ice, painting with medications, surgical removal
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners
Other information	You are infectious even when you don't have visible warts or bumps Condoms and other barrier protections do not always protect against genital warts It is caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)

Other names	The Virus
Group A or Group B?	Group B
How do you get it or pass it on?	Bodily fluids (saliva, blood, semen) via sex, sharing of needles, and other behaviour where fluid from one person's body can enter the other person's body.
Male/Female/Both	Both
Symptoms	May cause a flu-like illness Often asymptomatic for some time before displaying symptoms
Outcomes if untreated	Left untreated, HIV will progress to AIDS
Treatment	Antiretroviral HIV medication can help to prevent or slow the progress of HIV into AIDS, and can help people with HIV to live longer and healthier lives. There is no cure for HIV.
Who needs treatment?	Anyone who has been exposed to fluids from the infected person's body should be tested for HIV

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)

Other names	The Virus
Group A or Group B?	Group B
How do you get it or pass it on?	Bodily fluids (saliva, blood, semen) via sex, sharing of needles, and other behaviour where fluid from one person's body can enter the other person's body.
Male/Female/Both	Both
Symptoms	May cause a flu-like illness and leaves the body open to attack from illness. Often asymptomatic for some time before displaying symptoms of HIV which may progress to AIDS
Outcomes if untreated	Left untreated, AIDS can be fatal
Treatment	Antiretroviral medication can help to prevent or slow the progress of AIDS, and can help people with AIDS to live longer and healthier lives. There is no cure for AIDS.
Who needs treatment?	Anyone who has been exposed to fluids from the infected person's body should be tested for HIV
Other information	AIDS is a word referring to a number of different illnesses and diseases that can attack the body.

Hepatitis A

Group A or Group B?	Group B
How do you get it or pass it on?	Contaminated food, water or faeces (poop) from an infected person, or through anal sex.
Male/Female/Both	Both, although men who have sex with men, injecting drug users, or people living with an infected person are at higher risk.
Symptoms	Can be asymptomatic (no symptoms), especially in children. Symptoms include: fever nausea pain in the stomach area dark urine jaundice (yellow skin and eyes)
Outcomes if untreated	Left untreated, Hepatitis A can cause symptoms which make you so unwell that it is difficult or impossible for you to continue living life as normal. It can sometimes cause liver failure which can be fatal.
Treatment	There is no specific treatment and with medical support your body should heal from Hep A within 6 months. In extreme cases which progress to liver failure, a liver transplant is your only chance for survival.
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners and close contacts should be tested
Other information	A vaccination is available

Hepatitis B

Group A or Group B?	Group B
How do you get it or pass it on?	Bodily fluids (saliva, blood, semen) via sex, sharing of needles, and other behaviour where fluid from one person's body can enter the other person's body (eg sharing razors or toothbrushes, getting tattooed with infected equipment).
Male/Female/Both	Both, although men who have sex with men, injecting drug users, people with tattoos, or people living with an infected person are at higher risk.
Symptoms	Symptoms include: Loss of appetite Fatigue Nausea and vomiting Rashes Pain in the right-hand side of the stomach area Fever Sore joints Jaundice (yellow skin and eyes)
Outcomes if untreated	Left untreated, Hepatitis B can make you more at risk of liver cancer or liver failure.
Treatment	Most people will recover within 6 months with rest and medical support. Some will require medication to assist recovery. More intensive treatment will be required in cases which lead to liver cancer or liver failure.
Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners and close contacts should be tested
Other information	Hep B is carried by 2% of Australians. A vaccination is available

Hepatitis C

Group A or Group B?	Group B
How do you get it or pass it on?	Blood transmission through medical procedures, non-sterile tattooing and piercing equipment, sharing of needles or razors, sex where blood is involved, and other behaviours where exposure to even small amounts of infected blood occurs.
Male/Female/Both	Both
Symptoms	Symptoms include: Bleeding easily Bruising easily Fatigue Poor appetite Yellow discoloration of the skin and eyes (jaundice) Dark-colored urine Itchy skin Fluid buildup in your abdomen Swelling in your legs Weight loss Confusion, drowsiness and slurred speech Spiderlike blood vessels on your skin
Outcomes if untreated	Hepatitis C is a major cause of cirrhosis of the liver, or liver cancer
Treatment	Some infected people may get better on their own, but most cases will require treatment. Antiviral medications can cure more than 95% of cases



Who needs treatment?	Sexual partners, close contacts, and other contacts at risk (eg patients at same medical facility where transmission occurred, people tattooed at the same studio etc) should be tested
Other information	No vaccination is available yet.

Preventing STIs

Prevention of STIs varies depending on the STI, but some general rules may help to reduce your risk of getting or sharing an STI:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after using the toilet, and before and after eating
- Practice safe sex (use barrier protection)
- Know your body and what is normal for you. Inspect sexual partners for signs of infection before sexual contact
- Do not share any items which are exposed to bodily fluids (cutlery, toothbrushes, razors, tattooing or piercing equipment or jewellery, needles)
- Do not share fabric items such as towels, underwear or bedding
- Only go to reputable venues for cosmetic and medical procedures
- Keep surfaces clean from food, waste, and bodily fluids
- Get tested regularly

STI testing

Because many STIs show no symptoms, or have symptoms which can show up a long time after contracting (getting) the infection, it is really important

for you and your partner/s to have regular STI testing. Family Planning Tasmania can assess and test for some STIs, and can provide referrals for other types of testing like blood tests if required.

Contacting us, or making an appointment

Glenorchy

421 Main Road, Glenorchy TAS 7010

Phone: (03) 6273 9117

Opening Hours: Monday – Friday 9:00 – 5:00. Closed during lunch.

Launceston

269 Wellington Street, Launceston, 7250

Phone: (03) 6343 4566

Opening Hours: Monday – Friday 9:00 – 5:00. Closed during lunch.

Burnie

199 Mount St, Upper Burnie, 7320

Phone: (03) 6431 7692

Opening Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 9:00 – 5:00. Closed during lunch.



When you book an appointment

When you call to make an appointment, our receptionist will ask you a few questions to make sure we book the right appointment for you. Please make sure you have the privacy you need to answer these questions when you call.

Our reception staff will be able to tell you whether your appointment is with a doctor or a nurse and whether there will be any fees.

Confirming your appointment

You will receive an SMS two days before your appointment asking you to confirm you're able to attend. Please reply Yes to this SMS to avoid your appointment being cancelled.

Cancellations

Our appointments are in high demand. Should you no longer need yours or if you are unable to attend due to illness or another reason, please phone us as soon as possible to let us know.

When you come for your appointment

Please bring your Medicare, Healthcare or other Concession Card (if you have any of these).

If you are a new patient, please arrive 10 minutes early to complete our new patient forms.

**Family
Planning
Tasmania.**

