



## SUMMARY OF COMMON STIS

### CHLAMYDIA | Bacterial

- Symptoms** Most often is **asymptomatic**. If symptoms occur, they usually begin 1-2 weeks after contraction and can include abnormal (yellowish, milky, odorous, excessive) discharge in males and females, painful urination in males and females, or abdominal pain in women.
- Testing** Tests can be done with a urine sample or, for women, through bacterial cultures of a vaginal sample taken during Pap exams, typically by request.
- Treatment** Chlamydia is curable with antibiotics prescribed by a doctor. If exposed to chlamydia again, re-infection is likely. If left untreated, chlamydia can cause serious health problems, such as pelvic inflammatory disease in women or infertility in both men and women.

### GONORRHEA | Bacterial

- Symptoms** Most often is **asymptomatic** (especially in women). If women and men have symptoms, they are similar to those of chlamydia (see above). In men, a pus-like discharge can be especially common.
- Testing** Tests can be done with a urine sample or, for women, through bacterial cultures of a vaginal sample taken during Pap exams, typically by request.
- Treatment** Gonorrhea is curable with antibiotics prescribed by a doctor. If exposed to gonorrhea again, re-infection is likely. If left untreated, gonorrhea can cause serious health problems, such as pelvic inflammatory disease in women or infertility in both men and women.

### SYPHILIS | Bacterial

- Symptoms** Primarily, a **single sore** appears near the area of contraction (mouth, genital region, and/or anus) followed by a more extensive **rash**. These are painless and go away by themselves. However, **this does not mean that the bacteria are gone**. Syphilis will eventually enter a latent (asymptomatic) stage in which it may be causing internal harm.
- Testing** Tests can be done with a blood sample.
- Treatment** Syphilis is curable with antibiotics prescribed by a doctor, but the antibiotics will not reverse damage already caused by the infection. If exposed again, re-infection is likely.



## HPV | Viral

- Symptoms** Strains that cause genital warts are the easiest to identify and are diagnosed by visual inspection by a doctor. Strains that cause cervical cancer usually have no outward symptoms, but can normally be identified by a Pap smear in women. Most strains cause no symptoms or consequences, and one's body can significantly reduce the viral load over time. A strain that causes genital warts will not also cause cancer, and vice versa.
- Testing** A pap smear for women can detect cervical abnormalities that may indicate the presence of HPV. A visual inspection by a doctor can diagnose genital warts.
- Treatment** There is no cure for HPV. Effects of the virus will vary depending on the strain. Warts can be alleviated with over-the-counter or prescription drugs and some surgical procedures. Vaccines are discussed above.

## HSV-1 (oral herpes) and HSV-2 (genital herpes) | Viral

- Symptoms** After contraction, a person usually experiences an initial **outbreak of blisters or sores**. These can range in size and frequency (some people never experience an outbreak again), but usually go away within a couple of weeks. HSV-1 often manifests as "cold sores," not to be confused with canker sores. HSV can be transmitted in between breakouts, but it is more easily transmitted during breakouts. HSV is transmitted through skin-to-skin contact such as touching, kissing, sexual contact, oral sex, vaginal sex, and anal sex.
- Testing** A blood test is available for identifying HSV, though results can be difficult to interpret. If a person has sores, a doctor can take a cell culture from the sore and examine it under a microscope.
- Treatment** There is no cure for HSV. Often, symptoms can be reduced, outbreaks can be shortened, and the possibility of transmission can be reduced with prescription antiviral drugs. There are numerous over-the-counter brands for treatment of cold sores caused by HSV-1.

## HEPATITIS | Viral

- Symptoms** The word "hepatitis" means inflammation of the liver and also refers to a group of viral infections that affect the liver. The most common types are Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C. All of the types can be transmitted sexually (through the exchange of fluids), but Hepatitis A and B are the most likely to be passed this way.

Symptoms can appear within 6 weeks to 6 months of infection. Some people never show symptoms. Generally, symptoms include fever, fatigue, appetite loss, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, clay-colored bowel movements, and/or jaundice (yellowing of the eyes, skin, etc.).



- Testing** Hepatitis is diagnosed with a blood test. Depending on the results, the patient is diagnosed as “acute” or “chronic.”
- Treatment** Because the liver is a vital organ, chronic hepatitis can be severe. However, most cases of Hepatitis B (about 90%) resolve within 4 to 8 weeks without much treatment and without any lasting liver damage.

## **HIV | Viral**

***Also see following section on HIV.***

- Symptoms** Many people do not experience show symptoms of HIV. Some people develop a flu-like illness within a month or two after the virus enters the body, within symptoms such as fever, muscle soreness, headache, sore throat, and joint pain. These symptoms may be mild enough to go unnoticed. Then, a latent period ensues where no symptoms are present, typically lasting 8-10 years. The HIV virus may still infect others during this time.
- Following the latent infection period, more severe symptoms may develop. If a person does not receive treatment, HIV typically progresses to AIDS. This damages the immune system, making the individual more susceptible to opportunistic infections – infections that wouldn’t trouble a person with a healthy immune system.
- Testing** A rapid oral swab test is available which provides HIV results in approximately 20 minutes. A blood test can also be used to diagnose HIV.
- Treatment** There is no cure for HIV. However, Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy (HAART) may significantly slow the progression of HIV. For some patients, HAART can have severe side effects.

## **PUBIC LICE / CRABS | Bug**

- Symptoms** Severe itching in the genital area, visible lice eggs, or crawling lice.
- Testing** A doctor can diagnose pubic lice with a visual inspection.
- Treatment** Pubic lice is curable with over-the-counter lotion-like medications. Shaving will *not* cure pubic lice, because the bugs live in hair follicles. If exposed again, re-infection is probable.



**SCABIES | Bug**

- Symptoms** Scabies is caused by an infestation of the skin by the human itch mite. The microscopic scabies mite burrows into the upper layer of the skin where it lives and lays its eggs. This is typically not painful. The most common symptoms of scabies are intense itching and a pimple-like skin rash in crevices of the body (e.g. between fingers, near the genitals, under the breasts).
- Testing** A doctor can diagnose scabies with a visual inspection.
- Treatment** Scabies can be cured with a prescription cream. If exposed again, re-infection is probable.

**TRICHOMONIASIS | Protozoan**

- Symptoms** Most men do not have symptoms, but if they present, they can include temporary irritation and discharge. Women are more likely to have symptoms, but not always. They can include an odorous, discolored discharge and irritation of the genital area. These typically appear within one month of exposure.
- Testing** If symptoms present, a doctor may take a sample of discharge from the urethra (in men) or perform a pelvic exam (in women).
- Treatment** Trichomoniasis can be cured with a prescription, and it typically does not go away without them. If exposed again, re-infection is probable.

*Brought to you by the Student Life Student Wellness Center  
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<http://www.cdc.gov/std/>*