

The Problem

Anyone who has sex or sexual contact is at risk of getting a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD). Teenagers are at higher risk. Of the 12 million people who get STDs each year, around 3 million are teenagers. If you're thinking about having sexual contact, here are some tips on how to prevent STDs from happening to you!

STDs At-a-Glance

- You may have an STD and not know it, because many STDs show no signs or symptoms.
- Anyone who has vaginal, oral, and/or anal sex is at risk of getting an STD.
- Penetration is not needed to pass some STDs like herpes and genital warts.
- The only sure way to know if you have an STD is by having a medical exam.
- Many STDs cannot be cured or treated.
- Condoms provide some protection for several STDs, but avoiding sex (abstinence) is the best way to prevent disease.

More on STDs

www.intheknowzone.com/stds/info



Prevention is the Key

STDs can be prevented. It's up to you! Some STDs can't be cured, so it's important to avoid them altogether.

Using latex condoms during sex can reduce your chances of getting an STD. But remember, abstinence (not having sex) is the best way to stay healthy. Some STDs can be passed through blood or other types of contact.

STDs can affect anyone. So if you decide to have sex, be very careful when choosing your partner. It is always better to be in a mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected person, where you only have sex with each other. Be smart, be safe!

abstinence

For More Information

Go to www.intheknowzone.com for an extension of this pamphlet. Increase your knowledge using the information, statistics, images, and links.

Test your understanding with a quick quiz.



National STD Hotline:
(800) 227-8922

Don't stay in
the dark.

Get In the Know!

STDs and Prevention

never too safe!



in the know

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Being at Risk

Many young people think that nothing bad will ever happen to them. But the reality is that if you are sexually active, you're putting yourself at risk of catching an STD. In fact, about 25% of new STD cases are in people under the age of 20.

STDs Statistics

www.intheknowzone.com/stds/stats

You're Not Really Having Sex, Right?

Wrong! Being sexually active doesn't necessarily mean having actual intercourse. Heavy petting (touching someone's genitals), oral sex, and even kissing can spread some STDs, like genital warts, herpes, or hepatitis. There are plenty of "virgins" who are sexually involved. In one study, over one-third of teens who considered themselves to be virgins admitted to having sexual contact. Any one of those teens was at risk of catching an STD.

Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover

STDs are easy to spread. Anyone who has been sexually active can have one. What's worse, if someone has an STD the only way to know is for the person to be tested by a doctor. Before you become sexually active with someone, have an open, honest discussion about your sexual histories. If you have been sexually active, get tested at least once a year.

So You Think You're Being Careful...

If you choose to have sex, it's a good idea to use a latex condom. Condom use reduces the odds of getting an STD. However, you can still get some STDs like herpes, genital warts, and syphilis, to name a few, because the condom might not cover the infected area. The best way to protect yourself from STDs is to make the healthy choice not to have sex.

How STDs are Spread

www.intheknowzone.com/stds/transmission

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

It's easy to make good choices when you respect yourself and others. Waiting to have sex until you are in a committed, long-term, mutually monogamous relationship shows respect for yourself, and for your partner.

So, Remember...

- Abstinence, not having sex, is the best way to prevent any STD.
- Delay having sex. Younger people can get STDs more easily.
- If you choose sex, have only one uninfected partner, who only has sex with you.
- Penetration is not needed to pass some diseases.
- If you are having any sexual contact, always use a latex barrier.
- Alcohol and drugs affect how you think, leading to poor decision making. Stay smart, stay sober.
- Needles, syringes, body piercing, and tattooing can lead to infection.
- Don't be embarrassed to ask questions. Health care workers are there to help. If you're sexually active, get tested for STDs at least once a year. Young women should have a Pap test and check-up regularly.



Playing it Safe

www.intheknowzone.com/stds/prevention

Common STDs

Chlamydia and Gonorrhea

Many young people have these very common diseases and don't know it! Girls may have vaginal discharge, pain during sex, pain in the lower belly, bleeding between periods (spotting), or fever. Guys may feel itching or burning in their penis. May cause infertility (inability to have or father babies).

Genital Herpes

Sores or lesions found around the genital area. These might seem to disappear, but they are really hiding in the body. Herpes can be passed, even when hiding (latent), sexually or through heavy petting (touching someone's genitals).

Genital Warts

Look similar to warts on hands, but are found in genital areas and passed sexually or by touching someone's genitals. The virus that causes genital warts can lead to cervical cancer.

Hepatitis A, B, and C

Hepatitis A, B, and C, can be passed sexually or through contact with infected blood. Signs include: tiredness, poor appetite, yellow skin and eyes (jaundice), dark urine, and vomiting.

Pubic Lice (Crabs)

Small insects that suck on a person's blood in genital areas. Can be easily passed through clothes, towels, and bedding. Causes extreme itching.

Common STD Facts

www.intheknowzone.com/stds/facts



Syphilis

Painless sores appear first in mouth or genital areas, leading to a rash with fever and aches. The symptoms then disappear. Untreated, it can damage the brain, heart, spinal cord, and bones. May cause death.

Trichomoniasis

Women show a heavy, yellowish-green, bad smelling discharge (liquid) from the vagina, and itchiness and pain when urinating or having sex. Passed during sex, or in damp towels, wash-cloths, and bathing suits.

HIV and AIDS

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). AIDS attacks the immune system, so that any simple infection can result in death. Transmitted through sexual contact and contact with infected blood. There is no cure, but some medications may extend life.