

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

What are Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)? STIs are diseases and infections which are capable of being spread from person to person through sexual intercourse. Most, but not all, STIs are spread this way.

Some STIs are caused by bacteria. These are: syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhea, vaginitis, and NGU (nongonococcal urethritis). Other diseases are caused by a fungus, including: yeast infections. Still others are caused by a virus, such as: herpes, AIDS and chlamydia. The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) causes AIDS. The Herpes simplex II virus causes genital herpes, and the Human Papillomavirus causes Condyloma, or Genital Warts. Microscopic organisms are the cause of scabies, crabs and trichomoniasis.

HOW ARE STIS SPREAD?

Sexually transmitted infections may be spread from one person to another through sexual intercourse. Infections can also be spread through oral-genital contact, or in non-sexual ways. For instance; HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is spread through sexual intercourse, IV drug use and blood transfusions. Some vaginal infections are caused by changes in the vagina's chemical balance. Often, antibiotics may trigger this change and create a suitable setting for an infection.

SYMPTOMS

What are some of the symptoms? How would I know if I have been infected?

- Sores (either painful or painless)
- Blood in urine
- Burning sensation when urinating
- Rashes
- Itching
- Bumps
- Warts
- Unusual discharge

Many women never show the signs or symptoms that men usually have. Therefore, they continue to spread the disease rather than being treated for it.

(Pass out the Lecture Guide for students to complete as specific STIs are discussed.)