Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
Overview

- Definition of STIs: “What are they?”
- Transmission: “How are they spread?”
- Types of infection:
  - Bacterial (Chlamydia, LGV, Gonorrhea, Syphilis)
  - Viral (HSV, Hepatitis B, HIV, HPV)
  - Parasitic (Pubic lice, scabies, trichomoniasis)
- Prevention: “How can I protect myself?”
- Testing: “Where can I go for help?”

Sexually Transmitted Infections

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Infections that are most commonly passed through sexual contact:

- Oral
- Vaginal
- Anal
- Skin-to-skin
In order for transmission to occur, it is necessary to have:

- A body fluid with the germ in it
- A way of spreading the germ from one person to another
BODY FLUIDS: Which one’s are considered infectious?

- Semen
- Vaginal fluid
- Blood
- Fluid in sores or blisters
- Saliva
- Tears
- Sweat
- Urine
- Ear wax

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METHODS OF TRANSMISSION: 

Low Risk or No Risk

- Abstaining
- Hugging
- Kissing
- Holding hands
- Dancing
- Sitting on toilets

- Sharing lip balm
- Mutual monogamy
- Massage
- Sharing forks, knives, etc.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

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METHODS OF TRANSMISSION:

High Risk

- Sexual Intercourse
  - vaginal
  - anal
  - oral
- Blood-to-blood contact
- Sharing needles or other drug-use equipment
- Tattoo or body piercing
- Infected mother to her baby

Sexually Transmitted Infections

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Bacterial vs. Viral STI’s

- Bacterial STI’s include Chlamydia, LGV, gonorrhea & syphilis
- Can be treated and cured with antibiotics
- Untreated infection can cause PID, infertility, & epididymitis

- Viral STI’s include HPV, HIV, Herpes, & Hepatitis B
- There is NO cure
- Medication available to treat symptoms only
- Can pass onto others for the rest of your life

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Chlamydia

- The *most* common bacterial STI
- Greatest number of infections found in people 15 to 24 years old
- Untreated, it can affect the cervix and urethra, and occasionally the rectum, throat and eye
- 50% have *NO* symptoms - men and women
- Can be treated with antibiotics

Sexually Transmitted Infections
CHLAMYDIA
GONORRHEA

- The 2nd most common bacterial STI
- Most common in people aged 15 to 29
- Can affect the cervix, urethra, rectum, throat, and occasionally the eyes
- Can be treated with antibiotics
- Often **NO** symptoms, especially in females

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Sexually Transmitted Infections
GONORRHEA: Signs & Symptoms

- Female
  - Increased vaginal discharge
  - Painful urination
  - Lower abdominal pain
  - Bleeding after sex and between periods
  - Pain during sex

- Male
  - Thick, yellowish-green discharge from penis
  - Painful urination
  - Testicular pain or swelling
  - Rectal pain, discharge or itching

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Sexually Transmitted Infections
**SYPHILIS**

- A bacterial infection that progresses in stages
  - **Primary**: (3 days – 3 months) starts as a small, painless sore called a chancre; goes away on its own
  - **Secondary**: (2 – 24 weeks) rash on the body, palms of hands & soles of feet, hair loss, feeling sick
  - **Latent**: lesions or rashes can recur

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Untreated syphilis may lead to **tertiary syphilis**, which can damage:

- The cardiovascular system (heart & blood vessels)
- The neurological system
- Other major organs of the body
- Complications may lead to death
Genital Herpes

(Herpes Simplex Virus - HSV)

- Two types: HSV-1, causing cold sores, and HSV-2, causing genital herpes
- It is a viral infection causing outbreaks of painful sores and blisters
- Spread through direct vaginal, oral or anal sexual contact with an infected partner
- Also transmitted by receiving oral sex from a partner with a history of cold sores
- Symptoms can be treated with antiviral medications, but NO CURE

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Genital Herpes – Signs & Symptoms

- Prior to an outbreak, the person may feel a tingling or burning sensation where the virus first entered the skin
- Painful sores (external or internal)
- Inflammation and redness
- Fever
- Muscular pain
- Tender lymph nodes

Sexually Transmitted Infections

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Genital Herpes
Hepatitis B (HBV)

- Virus that attacks the liver
- Most infected people (90%) naturally produce antibodies to fight the disease, but some develop chronic HBV and will carry the virus for the rest of their life
- Chronic infection can lead to liver damage, cirrhosis, and cancer
- There is NO CURE, but vaccination can prevent infection
Hepatitis B
Woman suffering from liver cancer caused by HBV

Photo courtesy of Patricia Walker, MD

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Sexually Transmitted Infections
Human Papilloma Virus or HPV
(Genital Warts)

- One of the most common STIs
- About 75% of people will have at least one HPV infection during their lifetime
- There are over 100 types of HPV
- Low-risk HPV types cause genital warts
- High-risk HPV types may cause cancer of the cervix
- There is NO CURE, but vaccination is available to prevent certain types of HPV

Sexually Transmitted Infections

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Many people with low-risk types have no symptoms.

Other HPV types may cause:
- Warts on vulva, cervix, penis, scrotum, anus or in the urethra
- Itchiness
- Discomfort and bleeding during sex
HIV/AIDS

- HIV is a virus that destroys the immune system over time, robbing the body of its ability to fight other infections and illnesses.
- Once the immune system is weakened, other infections occur and AIDS develops (the fatal stage of HIV infection).
- The virus is present in blood, semen, vaginal secretions & breast milk.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

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HIV / AIDS – Signs & Symptoms

- 2 to 4 weeks after exposure, some people experience mild flu-like symptoms that last a few weeks, then disappear.
- Many people have NO symptoms until years after exposure.
- The only way to know is to get TESTED!

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Infections caused by parasitic infestations

- **Pubic lice**: tiny crab-like insects that nest in pubic hair & bite their host to feed on blood

- **Scabies**: mites that burrow below the surface of the skin to lay their eggs

- Can live for 1 – 3 days on bedding, towels and clothing

- Treated with medicated creams & lotions

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Pubic Lice

Sexually Transmitted Infections
Scabies mite
STI Prevention

- Abstain from sexual intercourse (only method that is 100% effective)
- Don’t share needles or other drug-use equipment
- Have only 1 mutually faithful, *uninfected* sexual partner
- Get tested for STI’s before having sex
- Use a latex condom & spermicide
- Avoid alcohol & other drugs
When should I get tested?

- Once you become sexually active, you need a check-up & STI testing once a year
- You also need an STI test if:
  - You didn’t use a condom or the condom broke
  - Your partner has an STI
  - Your partner is having sex with someone else
  - You have ever injected drugs
  - You or your partner have any STI symptoms
  - You have been raped
Where to go for help:

- Parents
- Health Teacher
- Health Unit Clinic
- Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner
- Walk-in-clinic
- Hospital Emergency Department

Sexually Transmitted Infections

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Health Unit Clinics

- Almonte
  - Tuesday 10:30 – 4:00 pm

- Smiths Falls
  - Wednesday 10:30 – 6:00 pm

- Brockville
  - Monday 1:00 – 5:00 pm
  - Thursday 2:30 – 7:00 pm

- Perth
  - Monday 10:30 – 1:00 pm

- Kemptville
  - Tuesday 11:00 – 4:00 pm

- Gananoque
  - Thursday 11:00 – 3:00 pm

Sexually Transmitted Infections

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Remember…

…your medical information will always remain CONFIDENTIAL!