

What should I do if I think I have a STI?

Don't be shy or afraid to get help. See your doctor and ask for a STI check-up or go to a STI clinic. They will test you and treat you as necessary. Be sure to follow the doctors instructions carefully and take all your medication. Return for a follow-up visit. If you have a STI, tell your sex partner(s) so they can be checked and treated as well.

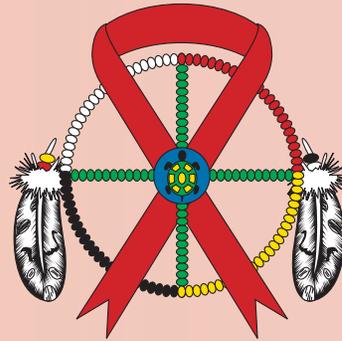
Where do I go for help?

If you are sexually active, see your family or local Doctor. You owe it to yourself, your partner and your future. Remember all your information is kept private.

How soon can I have sex after treatment starts?

If you or your partner are being treated for STI's, do not have sex! Wait until your doctor or nurse says it's okay.

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Healing Our Nations *Atlantic First Nations AIDS Network*

Toll Free: 1.800.565.4255

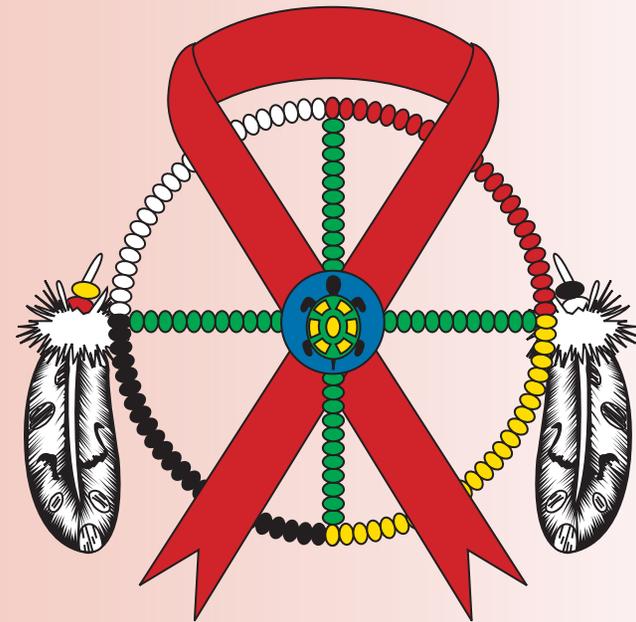
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HEALING OUR NATIONS



Atlantic First Nations AIDS Network

**Talk to your partner about STI's and
your health before you decide to
have sex.**

**Remember to always use a Latex
CONDOM**

What are STI's?
Sexually Transmitted Infections

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What are STI's? *Sexually Transmitted Infections*

Types of STI's?

HIV/AIDS: Human Immunodeficiency Virus. This is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), it is recognized as the deadliest of all STI's and is the leading cause of death among young people.

CHLAMYDIA: Is a common STI and one of the more serious ones. It can spread in your body and cause sterility in males and females. Mothers can pass this STI to their baby during childbirth.

Symptoms: usually appear from 1 to 3 weeks after sex with an infected person. Some people have chlamydia but have no signs or symptoms.

HEPATITIS B: Is an infection of the liver caused by a virus. It is the only STI that can be prevented by a vaccine. It spreads through contact with infected body fluids (blood, semen and vaginal fluid). It can also be passed from an infected mother to her baby during childbirth

Symptoms: Usually appear 2 to 6 months after contact. Possible symptoms may include: poor appetite, nausea, vomiting, headaches, jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin), dark tea colored urine and light colored stools. Even without symptoms, you can pass the virus to others. Some people carry the Hepatitis B virus for the rest of their lives and unknowingly pass it to their sex partner(s).

SYPHILIS: is a serious disease that can affect your entire body. You can have it without knowing and pass it to others.

Pregnant women with syphilis can give it to their unborn child, sometimes causing birth Defects, even death.

Symptoms: Syphilis has three stages

Stage one: 9 to 90 days after sexual contact with an infected person a painless sore may appear at the spot where the germ first entered the body (vagina, penis, inside the mouth or anus). Sores often go unnoticed and may disappear on their own, but the infection is still active.

Stage two: A few months later, an infected person may have "flu"-like symptoms. A rash may appear on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, or over the entire body. Symptoms can go away on their own, but the infection still remains active.

Stage three: In the final stage, if not treated, syphilis may cause serious health problems, such as heart disease and/or brain damage.

GENITAL HERPES: An STI that can cause painful sores around the genitals. It is from the same virus family can cause "cold sores" around the mouth. Genital herpes is spread by direct contact with open sores, but it is possible to pass the virus to your partner even when you don't have sores.

Symptoms: A tingling or itching in the genital area may appear within a week after having sex with an infected person. A cluster of tiny blisters soon appears. The blisters burst and leave painful sores, which last from 2 to 3 weeks. A fever or headache may occur with the first attack.

GENITAL WARTS: Are very contagious and spread by sexual contact with an infected partner. Approximately two-thirds of people who have sexual contact with a partner with genital warts will develop this disease, usually within 3 months of contact.

Symptoms: In women, the warts may appear inside and/or around the vagina or around the anus. In men, genital warts usually appear on the tip or the shaft of the penis, the scrotum or around the anus. Genital warts often occur in groups and can be very tiny cauliflower-like in appearance. Because there is no way to predict whether the warts will grow or disappear, people that suspect that they have genital warts should be examined and treated.

GONORRHEA: Also known as "the clap," "the dose" or "a drip." This is a common STI, which if not treated early, can cause serious problems, especially for women. A pregnant woman can pass gonorrhea to her baby during birth, possibly causing a serious eye infection.

Symptoms: A different discharge from the vagina or penis, a burning feeling when urinating, pain in the abdomen, sometime with fever and chills, pain during sex, pain or swelling in the testicles.

Information taken from:

Health Canada, What You Need to Know About STI: Sexually Transmitted Infections. Minister of Public Works and Government Services, 2002