

So you want to know about STIs?



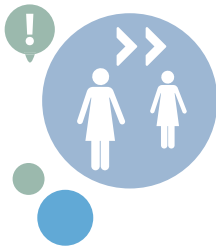
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About BPAS

The British Pregnancy Advisory service (BPAS) is the UK's leading provider of abortion care. We offer unplanned pregnancy counselling and abortion treatment. We've been treating women with unplanned and unwanted pregnancy for over 45 years. Nearly all the women we see have their care paid for by the NHS. We also provide contraception and STI testing as well as vasectomy.

About this booklet



An unplanned pregnancy is not the only thing to think about if you've had unprotected sex. Many Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) have little or no symptoms, so testing is very often the only way to find out if you have an infection.

This guide gives information about the main types of STIs, how and where to get tested, help and advice. For each STI, we explain how you could become infected, the symptoms to look for, and what is involved in testing and treatment.

What are Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)?

An STI is an infection passed on through vaginal, anal and oral sex, as well as through genital contact (skin to skin and close bodily contact) with an infected person. It's not just people who have a lot of sexual partners who can get STIs.

The most common STIs in the UK are chlamydia, genital warts and genital herpes.

There are many more infections and not all of them are referred to in this booklet.



How can I reduce my chances of catching an STI?

Most STIs can be avoided by using a condom during penetrative sex. Anyone who has unprotected sex (for example if they used a condom incorrectly) is at risk of catching an STI.

Shared sex toys are a potential source of infection and should be covered with a new condom, or cleaned properly before each new user.

Dental dams can be used to prevent contact with potentially infected bodily fluids between partners during oral sex. A dental dam is a thin, square piece of latex-rubber which is placed over the labia or anus during oral stimulation.

Many people won't feel the desire to engage in some of the activities mentioned in this booklet, but other people will. You don't have to agree to any act that you don't want to, or feel that you have been pressurised into.



Should I get tested?

If you suspect that you've got an STI, or have put yourself at risk of getting an STI, see a medical professional as soon as you can. Most infections are easily treated and the longer you leave it, the worse an infection may become.



So get tested, especially if:

- you think you have symptoms
- you recently had sex without a condom with a new partner
- you or your partner have had unprotected sex with someone else
- you have had sex with someone who you know has an STI
- you have another STI
- you are pregnant or planning a pregnancy



If you or your partner are worried about STIs, anything from avoiding them to testing and treating them, talk to someone who specialises in STIs and other sexual health concerns.

Although you may find the prospect of doing this quite embarrassing, these trained professionals are used to helping people in this way, so there is very little that will shock or surprise them.

STI FACT

There were nearly half a million new STIs diagnosed in 2012 and those aged under 25 have the highest rates of infection



Where can I get tested?

There are lots of places to get tested or seek advice:

- Your local **NHS Genito Urinary Medicine (GUM)** or **Contraception and Sexual Health (CASH)** Department is the best place to start. You can find your nearest service from www.nhs.uk/service-search
- **NHS national sexual health helpline.** Call 0300 123 7123 for information and advice on contraception, sexual health and local services
- **Your own GP**
- **FPA** visit www.fpa.org.uk
- **Brook** text 07717 989 023 or webchat www.askbrook.org.uk



Questions and answers

Will I have to pay?

No - all the services listed in this guide are free. However you can pay to be tested at private clinics, and STI testing websites.

I am under 16 - can I still have an STI test?

Yes - as long as the doctor, nurse or health worker believes that you understand the implications of your decision to be tested.

Do I have to tell anybody?

No - even if you are under 16, doctors, nurses and other health workers have very strict rules on confidentiality. The law says that they have to keep all patient records and information completely private. In really exceptional cases, if they consider that you or another person is in serious danger, they may feel the need to pass information on, but would always talk to you about this first.



Chlamydia

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection. The bacteria is present in a man's semen and women's vaginal fluid, if they have the infection.

Chlamydia is passed on through unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex. It can also be passed on using shared sex toys.

70% of women and 50% of men with chlamydia will have no noticeable symptoms.

STI FACT

Chlamydia is the most commonly diagnosed STI in the UK

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Women

- bleeding between periods/heavier periods
- pain and/or bleeding after sex
- lower abdominal pain (pelvic pain)
- an unusual vaginal discharge
- pain when passing urine

Men

- white/cloudy or watery discharge
- pain when passing urine
- pain in the testicles



TESTING AND TREATMENT

Anyone aged 15-24 has a high risk of catching chlamydia so it makes sense to get tested regularly with each new sexual partner, or every 3 months. If you're in a stable, regular relationship then testing just once a year could be an option. Testing is more widely available for chlamydia than it is for other STIs - testing is often also available at pharmacies, GP practices, youth services and www.freetest.me.

Women - You may be asked to use a swab to collect cells from inside your vagina or a doctor or nurse may examine you and take a sample of cells.

Men - You will be asked to provide a urine sample. You may be asked not to pass urine for 1-2 hours before you provide the sample. The nurse or doctor may use a swab to take a sample of cells.

What is the treatment for chlamydia?

It is treated with antibiotics, taken as a single dose or a course over 2 weeks.

Antibiotics are sometimes given before the test results are back.

How effective is the treatment?

As long as the course of treatment is taken correctly, the treatment is over 95% effective.

What happens if chlamydia is not treated?

Untreated chlamydia can cause long term problems. In women the infection can spread to reproductive organs causing pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can lead to pelvic pain, infertility and ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy which develops outside the womb). In men it can lead to infection in the testicles and possibly reduced fertility.

How soon after sex can I be tested?

Have a check-up as soon as possible, you can get tested even if you don't have symptoms.

Gonorrhoea

What is gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is a bacteria found in semen and vaginal fluids of those with the infection. The bacteria can live inside the cervix, urethra, rectum, throat and sometimes the eyes.

It is spread during vaginal, anal and oral sex, and the sharing of sex toys.

10% of men and 50% of infected women have no symptoms.



STI FACT
New gonorrhoea diagnoses rose 21% in 2012

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Women

- an unusual vaginal discharge; can be thin, watery and yellow or green
- pain when passing urine
- lower abdominal pain
- bleeding between periods or heavier periods

Men

- an unusual discharge (can be thin watery and yellow or green) from the tip of the penis
- pain when passing urine
- pain and tenderness in the testicles
- inflammation of the foreskin

Men and women

- infection in the rectum, throat and eyes

TESTING AND TREATMENT

Women - The doctor or nurse may use a swab to take a sample of cells from the cervix, or you may be asked to take the samples yourself.

Men - You will be asked to provide a urine sample. They ask you not to urinate for 1-2 hours before the test.

What is the treatment for gonorrhoea?

A course of antibiotics is used to treat gonorrhoea and is 95% effective.

It is given as either a single dose of oral antibiotics or an injection. If your partner has gonorrhoea, you will be treated even before you get your test results.

A re-test is needed 2 weeks after treatment, to check if it has been successful.

When will the signs and symptoms go away?

Symptoms should start to get better within a week, though pelvic pain and pain in the testicles may take up to 2 weeks. If it does not improve you will need to go back to your doctor for further treatment.

What happens if it is left untreated?

If left untreated it can spread to other parts of the body causing long-term illness. It can spread to the reproductive organs and cause infections and reduce fertility in both men and women. Women can also develop pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and ectopic pregnancies.

How soon after sex can I have a test?

It is possible to do a test within a few days of having sex. You can have a test done even if you don't have any symptoms.

Syphilis

What is syphilis?

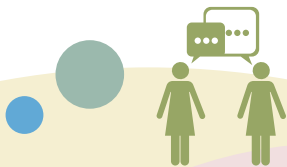
Syphilis is a bacterial infection passed on through sexual contact, vaginal, anal, oral sex, and sharing sex toys.

It can also be passed on by direct skin-to-skin contact with someone who has syphilis sores and rash.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Syphilis has three stages:

- **The first stage:** called primary syphilis can start with a painless sore or sores on or around the vagina or penis. The sores can sometimes appear in the mouth or around the anus.
- **the second stage:** called secondary syphilis can appear as a rash and flu-like symptoms.
- **the third stage or latent stage:** Many years of untreated syphilis may cause serious damage to the heart, brain, other internal organs, bones, eyes and nervous system.



TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

The doctor or nurse will take a blood test and may examine your genital area, especially if you have any sores.

If you have sores the doctor or nurse may take a sample of the fluids from the sores using a swab.

What is the treatment for syphilis?

First and second stage of syphilis is treated with antibiotics, this can be a single injection or a course of antibiotics. Penicillin is the most common treatment, but alternatives can be used if you are allergic to penicillin.

Some people suffer from complications and may need further treatments.

How effective is the treatment?

Treatment for first and second stages is effective and if taken correctly will cure syphilis.

What happens if syphilis is left untreated?

Left untreated, syphilis can cause long-term complications and can lead to death.

How soon after sex can I have a test?

It is important not to delay getting tested if you have been in sexual contact with someone who has syphilis as the sores in the first stage of syphilis are very infectious and can take 4-6 weeks to heal.

HIV

What is HIV?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that weakens the immune system, making it harder for the body to fight infections.

HIV can be passed on when infected blood, semen, pre-cum or vaginal fluid enters the body through unprotected vaginal, anal and oral sex and sharing of sex toys or using a needle or syringe, previously used by someone with HIV.

A women infected with HIV can pass it on to her baby before or during birth, or by breastfeeding.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Many people infected with HIV have no immediate signs and symptoms, but those who do, may notice flu-like symptoms several weeks after infection.

The symptoms can include:

- fever
- rash
- swollen glands
- sore throat
- ulcers
- aching muscles or joints



TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

A sample of blood is taken. The blood is checked for a rise in antibodies; if infected with HIV the body tries to fight the infection by creating more antibodies.

Some clinics look for a large protein (called P24) in the virus to find out if you have just been infected with HIV. This can be detected in the blood system quicker than the antibodies.

An HIV test should only be done with your permission. You may wish to talk about the test, what you are feeling and the implications of a positive result.

Most results are available within 10 days, some clinics can offer same day results.

You may be asked to return to the clinic for your results.

If you are worried you may have been infected in the last 72hrs you can visit a GUM clinic, sexual health clinic or A&E.

What is the treatment for HIV?

If you have had sex with someone in the last 3 days (72hrs) who has HIV, you can be given a short course of anti-HIV drugs to help prevent infection. This is known as Post Exposure Prophylaxis or PEP. The sooner you are treated, the better the drugs will work.

There is no cure for HIV but antiretroviral therapy (ART) has transformed it from a fatal condition to a permanent infection which can be carefully managed with medication.

ART or combination therapy can reduce or delay the start of late stage of HIV infection.

How soon after sex can I have a test?

If you are worried in any way it is advised that you visit your local GP or GUM clinic. They will test you even if you do not have any signs or symptoms.

You may be asked to come back again 3 months after the sexual contact, as the virus cannot always be detected in the blood. The virus can still be passed onto somebody else during this time.

What happens if HIV isn't treated?

Because HIV attacks the immune system, if it is left untreated it can have long-term effects and can lead to death. There is no cure for HIV but with careful monitoring and treatment those infected can lead a long and full life.

STI FACT

Over 880,000 UK HIV tests were taken in 2011, and 6,280 people were found to be infected



5 reasons to have a HIV test

1

Lots more people than you think have HIV

(around 96,000 people in the UK in 2011)

2

You might already have it

(around 22,600 people had undiagnosed HIV in 2011)

3

**A late HIV diagnosis is often the reason people die
of AIDS-related illnesses**

4

It is a simple blood test

5

It could save your life

Genital herpes

What is genital herpes?

Genital herpes is a virus called herpes simplex (HSV). HSV can infect the genital and anal area (genital herpes) and also can be found in the mouth and around the nose (cold sores), fingers and hands.

Genital herpes is caused by the virus entering the body through small cracks in the skin or through the moist soft lining found at the vagina, rectum, urethra, foreskin and mouth.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Most people will not have any symptoms or be aware of them. Sometimes symptoms may show within a few days in others it may take weeks, months, even years to show symptoms.

If you do get any symptoms, you may get some or all of the following:

- flu-like symptoms such as fever, tiredness, headache, swollen glands, aches and pains in the lower back and down the legs
- stinging, tingling or itching in the genital or anal area
- small, fluid-filled blisters, which burst after a day or two and leave red sores
- pain when passing urine

TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

A doctor or nurse will look at the affected area and take a swab of fluid.

What is the treatment for genital herpes?

The treatment of genital herpes is to relieve the pain and prevent the virus from multiplying. Treatment is recommended when you have the first outbreak. You will need to take antiviral tablets daily for 5 days.

You may be given the tablets to take home with you in case you have another outbreak so you can start treatment straight away.

When will the symptoms go away?

The outbreaks can last any time depending on your health and whether it is your first outbreak or a recurrent outbreak. They can last 2-4 weeks for the first outbreak. Flu-like symptoms last about a week and pain/irritation can last 2 weeks or longer.

What happens if it isn't treated?

The blisters will clear up by themselves but you will find it takes longer to clear and you run the risk of passing it onto someone else.



Genital herpes

How is genital herpes passed on?

- during vaginal or anal sex and sharing sex toys
- close genital contact, you do not need to have penetrative sex for it to be passed on
- skin-to-skin contact outside the genital area protected by the condom
- a person with herpes on their hands touches your vagina, genitals or anal area



Easing the discomfort of herpes:

- apply an ice pack wrapped up in a towel directly onto the sores for up to an hour
- put cold, wet tea bags on the sores, to soothe and speed up the healing process
- avoid washing too often and when you do wash, take a cool shower
- if it hurts to urinate, weeing in a warm bath can help
- drink extra fluids such as water and soft drinks
- wear loose fitting clothing

STI FACT

Treatment for cold sores is not suitable for genital herpes



Genital warts

What are genital warts?

Genital warts are an infection of the skin, genitals and anal area with a virus called human papilloma virus (HPV). There are over 100 different types of HPV, which can affect different parts of the body.

The virus for genital warts is usually passed on by sexual contact.

- they can spread from one person to another during vaginal or anal sex
- it can also be spread by skin-to-skin contact, or close genital contact.
A condom doesn't protect the whole of the genital area, so you can still get warts if you use a condom
- it can spread from the genital area to the anal area without having anal sex

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

HPV infection will not always show any symptoms and the virus will go away by itself, so you may not know if you have the virus. Warts can appear anytime from 3 weeks to years after coming in contact with the virus. You may notice small fleshy bumps, in or on the genital or anal area.

The warts on women can be found on the vulva (the lips around the vagina), cervix and upper thighs, in the vagina and anus. On men they can be found around the penis, scrotum, and urethra and in the anus.

Often they are tiny and you don't notice them but sometimes they can be quite large and look like pink cauliflower-like lumps. They tend to be painless but can be itchy and inflamed. They may cause bleeding from the anus or urethra.

TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

The doctor or nurse will look at your genitals, as the warts can be very small they may use a magnifying lens. They may also do an internal examination of your vagina and anus.

What is the treatment?

You will only be treated if you have visible warts. Treatment for warts depends upon the size and amount of warts you have.

Warts can be removed by:

- putting cream or liquid onto the warts for a few days a week over a number of weeks
- freezing (cryotherapy)

STI FACT

Genital warts are the most common viral STI in the UK

How effective is the treatment?

For some they can go quickly and for others it can take a number of treatments.

There is evidence that smokers take longer to get rid of warts. You will need to come back to the clinic to make sure the treatment is working and the warts have gone.

How soon after sex can I have a test?

You can be checked as soon as you believe you have been in contact with someone who has HPV but it can take a while for the warts to appear, so the doctor or nurse will show you what to look for and what to do.

What about cervical cancer?

Girls aged 12-13 are offered HPV vaccinations to protect them from the main types of HPV, which sometimes cause cervical cancer. These vaccinations may help prevent genital warts. When women reach 25, they are regularly checked for abnormal changes to the cervix.

Trichomonas vaginalis

What is trichomonas vaginalis?

Trichomonas vaginalis is an infection caused by parasites. The parasite is found in the vagina and urethra in women and in the urethra in men.

The infection is passed on by sexual contact (vaginal and anal sex) and the sharing of sex toys.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Half of men and women won't have any symptoms but if you do you may notice the following:

Women

- soreness, inflammation and itching around the vagina
- a change to your normal vaginal discharge
- pain when passing urine

Men

- discharge from the penis, which can be white and thin
- pain or burning sensation when passing urine
- inflammation of the foreskin



TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

Women - You may be asked to use a swab to collect cells from inside your vagina or a doctor or nurse may examine you and take a sample of cells.

Men - You will be asked to provide a urine sample. You may be asked not to pass urine 1-2 hours before you provide the sample. The nurse or doctor may use a swab to take a sample of cells.

What is the treatment for trichomonas?

You may be given a single dose or a week long course of antibiotics.

You will not be able to drink any alcohol during the treatment or for 48hrs afterwards, as it can react badly with the antibiotics. You should notice an improvement in the signs and symptoms after a few days.

Can trichomonas go away without being treated?

It is very unlikely that it will go away and if you do not get it treated you could pass it on to someone else. You would have a higher risk of catching HIV if you come into contact with it.

How soon after treatment can I have sex?

If you have any concerns you should get checked out straight away. If you have trichomonas it is possible for it to show up on the test after a few days.



STI FACT

Up to half of infected people will not have any symptoms at all

Non-specific urethritis

What is non-specific urethritis?

Urethritis is inflammation of the urethra. Sometimes it is called non-specific urethritis (NSU) or non-gonococcal urethritis (NGU).

Here are some of the ways you may become infected with non-specific urethritis:

- infection with STIs, such as chlamydia - up to 50% of men who have NSU are found to also have chlamydia
- infection with herpes
- bacteria that cause infection in the kidneys can travel down the urinary tract and cause inflammation in the urethra
- a partner's vaginal bacteria can cause males to develop non-specific urethritis
- applying liquids such as tea tree oil, antiseptic and disinfectant
- damage to the urethra, from vigorous sex or masturbation or inserting objects in the urethra
- sensitivity to chemicals found in condoms and perfumed soaps

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Signs and symptoms usually show up 2-4 weeks after contact. Symptoms can include:

- a white or cloudy discharge from the penis
- difficulty, pain or burning when urinating
- the feeling that you need to urinate more often
- itching or irritation at the end of the urethra

TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

The doctor or nurse will look for signs of inflammation but they will also recommend that you are tested for chlamydia and gonorrhoea.

Women - You may be asked to use a swab to collect cells from inside the vagina or a doctor or nurse may examine you and take a sample of cells.

Men - You will be asked to provide a urine sample. You may be asked not to urinate for 1-2 hrs before you provide the sample. The nurse or doctor may use a swab to take a sample of cells.

What is the treatment for NSU?

The usual treatment is with antibiotics, this may involve a single dose or a course for up to 2 weeks.

For some men it can take more than one treatment for it to go away, you may be required to go back for a check up or you might receive a phone call to check the symptoms have gone.

Will it go away by itself?

It is very unlikely to go away by itself. If left untreated, it can also cause complications such as:

- painful infection in the testicles
- reduced fertility
- inflammation of the joints
- pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), if the NSU is caused by chlamydia

How soon after treatment can I have sex?

We recommend you do not have any sexual contact till you and your partner have finished your treatments.



Thrush

What is thrush?

Thrush is caused by an overgrowth of a yeast fungus which usually lives harmlessly on your skin, in your mouth, gut and vagina. Your body normally keeps it under control but sometimes conditions in your body change and signs and symptoms can appear.

What causes thrush to develop?

- pregnancy
- wearing tight or synthetic clothing such as nylon, which prevents ventilation
- taking certain antibiotics
- chemotherapy
- products that may cause irritation of the vagina, (vaginal deodorant and perfumed bubble bath)
- stress can also effect some people

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Women

- itching, soreness and redness around the vagina, vulva or anus
- unusual discharge from the vagina, this can look like cottage cheese
- pain when passing urine, or when having sex

Men

- irritation, burning, itching or redness under the foreskin and tip of the penis
- a discharge under the foreskin, which can look like cottage cheese
- difficulty in pulling back the foreskin, which can smell yeasty

TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

A doctor or nurse may look at your genital area, or take a sample from the genital area using a swab.

What is the treatment for thrush?

Thrush is treated with antifungal cream, pessaries or pills. The cream is applied to the genital area and the pessary (oval shaped tablet), is placed in the vagina. You can buy antifungal treatments from your local pharmacy.

Some treatments can weaken condoms, diaphragms and caps.

Please speak with your pharmacist for advice.

How effective is the treatment?

If thrush is treated correctly, symptoms should disappear within a few days.

What happens if thrush is not treated?

For many women and men, thrush will go away by itself.

If I have thrush, will I still be able to get pregnant?

There is no evidence to say thrush will prevent you from getting pregnant.

STI FACT

3 out of 4 women will have thrush at some point in their lives



Bacterial vaginosis

What is bacterial vaginosis?

We do not really know what causes bacterial vaginosis (BV) but it may be caused by:

- less of the 'normal' bacteria present in the vagina
- too many other types of bacteria in the vagina
- a change in the pH balance (acid/alkaline balance) of the vagina, resulting in the vagina becoming more alkaline

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

A lot of women do not have any signs or symptoms but if you do you may notice a change to your normal vaginal discharge or an unusual smell.

Bacterial vaginosis can be caused by:

- using scented soaps/bubble bath
- antiseptic liquids in the bath
- douche or vaginal deodorant
- strong washing powder
- smoking
- semen in the vagina



TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

The doctor or nurse will take of sample of cells using a swab.

They may also take some of the vaginal discharge to do a pH test on it to see if the balance has changed.

What is the treatment for bacterial vaginosis?

Antibiotics are given in most cases of BV. You may also be given some cream to use in your vagina, the nurse will tell you how to use this.

How effective is the treatment?

Treatment is very effective if taken properly but a lot of women find BV will come back at some point in their lifetime.

What happens if bacterial vaginosis is left untreated?

For many women it will disappear by itself but there is some research to show it can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and higher risk of catching HIV.

Should I tell my partner?

Men do not get bacterial vaginosis but if you have a female partner they may wish to go to their GP and get some advice.

STI FACT

1 in 3 women will get BV at some point in their lives



Pubic lice

What are pubic lice?

Pubic lice are tiny parasitic insects that live in coarse hair. They have a crab-like appearance and are about 2mm long. This is why they are often referred to as crabs.

The eggs are called nits and are brownish dots, which attach themselves to the hair. They can also be found on underarm hair, leg hair and even beards. Pubic lice are different to head lice.

The lice are passed on by close bodily contact or sexual contact. Both men and women can have them and pass them on. They can only live 24hrs off the human body, so they tend to stay put. They cannot fly or jump.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

It can take several weeks after coming into contact to have any symptoms.

The most common symptoms are:

- itching in the affected area
- black powdery droppings from the lice in your underwear
- brown eggs on pubic or other body hair
- irritation and inflammation in the affected area
- sky-blue spots or tiny specks of blood on the skin



TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

A doctor or nurse will check your pubic area for any eggs or lice. As they are so small they may use a magnifying glass.

What is the treatment for pubic lice?

Treatment is very simple, cream, lotion or shampoo is used for 3-7 days. You do not need to shave off the infected hair.

As the lice can live away from humans for 24hrs, it is recommended to wash clothing, bedding and towels in a hot cycle (50°C or higher).

Partners should also be treated. You may require more than one treatment, as the lice can be resistant to some treatments.

Will I need a check up?

We recommend you have a check up after a week to check the lice have gone.

What happens if they are not treated?

If they are left untreated the lice will carry on living on your hair, they will not go away by themselves.

STI FACT

Lice can live up to 24hrs off the body



Scabies

What is scabies?

Scabies is caused by a form of mite that can live around your genitals, on your hands, wrist, elbows, abdomen, underneath the arms, on your buttocks, breasts, feet or ankles, and around the nipples in women.

It is passed by close body contact. As the mites can live off your body for up to 72hrs, they can also be transferred from clothing, towels and bed linen.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

It can take up to 6 weeks before any signs or symptoms appear after contact with scabies.

You may notice:

- intense itching, which can get worse at night or after a hot bath or shower
- itchy red rash or tiny spots. Sometimes the rash can look similar to eczema
- inflammation or raw, broken skin



TESTING AND TREATMENT

What does the test involve?

The doctor or nurse will inspect the affected area and may take a sample of the flaky skin to look at it under the microscope.

What is the treatment for scabies?

A cream or lotion will be prescribed. This is applied from the neck down and is washed off after 12 hours (so it is usually applied overnight).

It is recommended that immediately afterwards clothes, towels and bed-linen are washed on a high temperature (50 °C) to kill any mites and prevent re-infection. A check-up may be needed to make sure that the treatment was a success.

Will scabies go away untreated?

No, you will need treatment to get rid of the infection.

How soon can I have sex?

We recommend you do not have any close body contact till you and your partner have finished your treatment and you have had a check up to make sure the infection has gone.

STI FACT

Mites can live up to 72hrs off the body

5 reasons to have an STI test

1

There are often no symptoms

(so you may have an STI and not know it)

2

They are more common than you think

(45,000 new cases of STI were diagnosed in 2012)

3

They are easy to test for

(especially if you're already in a BPAS clinic!)

4

Most STI are easy to treat

(if treated early, they probably won't cause long-term problems)

5

**If left untreated they can become painful and
cause serious damage to your body**

Please register with www.bpasresources.org
to order copies of:

- So you want to know about STIs
- So you want to know about contraception
- So you think you might be pregnant
- Lots more BPAS resources



BPAS - here if you need us.

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