

THIS IS ONLY A TEST

GYT

GET YOURSELF TALKING

GET YOURSELF TESTED

1 in 2 sexually active young people will get an STD by the age of 25.

Most won't know it.

The only way to know for sure if you have an STI is to Get Yourself Tested.


Testing is simple. For chlamydia and gonorrhea, you typically just have to pee in a cup. For HIV, a swab of your mouth may be all that is required; sometimes a doctor will take a blood sample. For syphilis, a simple blood test is required.

The Affordable Care Act requires that all insurance policies beginning on or after September 23, 2010 cover preventive health services without requiring a copayment, co-insurance or meeting of a deductible as long as those services are provided by a network provider. This includes HIV testing and STI screening for all adults who are at "higher risk" of infection. –U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Although anyone who is sexually active is at some risk for exposure to sexually transmitted infection, there are factors that increase that risk. **When you go to your medical provider for STI screening, discuss the following risk factors with them.**

- **Having unprotected sex.** People who do not use condoms for vaginal or anal penetration are at increased risk for getting an STI. Improper or inconsistent use of condoms also increases risk. Use of condoms or dental dams decrease the risk of infection during oral sex.
- **Having more than one sexual partner.**
- **Having a high-risk sexual partner.** If a sexual partner has risk factors like multiple partners, that increases your own risk.
- **Having a history of STI's.** Being infected with one STI makes it easier for another STI to take hold. Additionally, it is possible to re-infected by the same infected partner if they are not also treated.
- **Anyone forced to have sexual intercourse or sexual activity.** Risk of infection is increased by absence of latex barriers and injury. Prophylactic treatment with antibiotics and anti-virals is available.
- **Injecting drugs.** Needle sharing spreads many serious infections, including HIV which can then be transmitted sexually.

Sources: WebMD and Mayo Clinic

 **Costs of STI testing can vary widely. Make sure to discuss the cost of testing with your medical provider, and ensure that your insurance will cover any planned testing** (see below for recommended preventive health services testing). **Also discuss with your provider whether they would code your testing as "for someone at higher risk of infection" given any relevant risk factors.**

There are resources for finding lower cost testing. The CDC runs a webpage on which you can find local testing locations. A search there for our zip code identifies Planned Parenthood (which offers a "package" of testing including chlamydia, gonorrhea and HIV for \$121) and the Colorado Springs Health Department (which offers reproductive health services on a sliding scale).



Getting tested is simple.

Getting tested protects you and your partners.

Getting tested can be a great way to build trust and intimacy in a new relationship.

You can have an STI and still feel healthy. The only way to know if you have an STI is to get tested.

The most common STI's among people aged 15-25 are HPV, Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Herpes, Syphilis, Hepatitis B and HIV/AIDS. **Fortunately, all common STI's can be treated and most can be cured.** There are even effective vaccines for HPV and Hepatitis B, which are recommended for all college students.

Wondering what you should get tested for? The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion recommends:

HIV

They recommend that everyone ages 15 to 65 should get tested for HIV at least once, and pregnant women also need to get tested. How often you should get tested depends on your risk for HIV infection.

Get tested for HIV at least once a year if you:

- Have sex without a condom with someone who may have HIV
- Have sex with men who have sex with men
- Use drugs with needles
- Have a sex partner who has HIV
- Have had a sexually transmitted disease (STD)

Get tested every 3 to 6 months if you:

- Are a man who has sex with men
- Have sex with more than one partner
- Have sex with people you don't know
- Have sex for drugs or money

Chlamydia and Gonorrhea

For women:

- If you are age 24 or younger and having sex, get tested once every year.
- If you are age 25 or older, get tested if you have multiple sex partners or a new sex partner.

For men:

- Talk with a doctor about getting tested if you are worried about chlamydia, gonorrhea, or other STDs.

Syphilis

For women:

- If you are pregnant, get tested for syphilis.

For men:

- If you are a man who has sex with men – and you or your partner has sex with anyone else – get tested for syphilis.

If you have any symptoms (like unusual discharge from penis, vagina or anus; sores, blisters, warts, rashes or itchiness in the genital area), see your medical provider to get tested.

If you have a partner who has tested positive for an STI, you should get tested for that STI.

**Talk to your partners about your sexual health history.
And, Get Yourself Tested!**

