



HOW ARE SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STI) TREATED?

- Some of the most common STIs can be cured if treated right away. Treatment is available for all sexually transmitted infections (STIs), no matter the cause, to relieve symptoms, even if a cure is not possible.
- STIs caused by viruses, such as genital herpes and genital warts, are not cured with antibiotics, but treatments are available to relieve symptoms.
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS, is a sexually transmitted virus that is treated with many medicines but is not cured.



For more information or for testing information, please call or visit your local community health centre or health care provider.

To contact NITHA:

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**NORTHERN INTER-TRIBAL
HEALTH AUTHORITY**

**SEXUALLY
TRANSMITTED
INFECTIONS
(STI)**

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WHAT IS A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION (STI)?

A sexually transmitted infection (STI) is an infection that commonly involves sex organs. It is caused by germs known as bacteria, viruses, or parasites. It is spread to another person through sex.

The common STIs include: Chlamydia, HIV, Hepatitis B and C, Gonorrhea, Crab Lice, Syphilis, Trichomoniasis, Genital Warts (HPV) and Genital Herpes.



HOW DO YOU GET A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION (STI)?

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) – are generally acquired by sexual contact. The bacteria, viruses or parasites that cause sexually transmitted infections may pass from person to person in blood, semen, or vaginal and other bodily fluids. Some STIs can be passed by nonsexual contact, such as by sharing needles or during the delivery of a baby or during breastfeeding.

WHO IS GREATEST RISK?

Anyone who is sexually active can get an STI. STIs effect both men and women.

- Those who have sex with a person with STI.
- Those who engage in unprotected sex with new and anonymous partner and those with multiple partners.
- Those who have had previous history of STI.

WHAT ARE LONG TERM COMPLICATIONS?

- If left untreated, an STI can lead to serious – possibly devastating – long-term complications and in rare cases, cancer.
- STIs can cause serious infection of the reproductive organs. This can lead to infertility, ectopic pregnancy, pelvic abscess, or chronic pelvic pain.
- STIs in pregnant women can cause problems such as miscarriage, low birth weight, premature delivery, and infections in their newborn baby.

HOW ARE STI's PREVENTED?

- Condoms can reduce your risk of getting some STIs if used the right way every single time you have sex.
- Not engaging in unprotected oral, vaginal, or anal sex.
- Have sex with only one partner who has been tested and free of STI and limit the number of sexual partners you have.
- Get tested regularly: once a year for sexually active youth or when you get a new partner.



If you are a parent of a teenager, there are many resources available, such as your health professional or community health clinic, to help you talk with your teen about safer sex, preventing STIs, and being evaluated and treated for STIs.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

You can have an STI without knowing it. Many STIs do not have symptoms. Get a check-up right away if you feel or see any of these symptoms:

- A burning sensation when peeing.
- An abnormal discharge or smell from the vagina or penis.
- Itching, burning or pain in the vagina or penis.
- Sores, blisters, rashes, swelling, or wart-like growths on or around the vagina or penis--that may or may not hurt.
- Many STI symptoms will go away or change quickly. This does not mean that the STI has gone away. It will be harder for your health professional to diagnose your STI after the symptoms have changed. A delay in being evaluated may lead to a more serious illness.