

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

Revised by PPAU Education in 2020.

<p>Audience: Teens and young adults</p>	<p>Time: 60 min</p>
<p>Enduring Understanding: I feel empowered to protect my body from sexually transmitted infections.</p>	
<p>Essential Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the only method that will give someone 100% protection from sexually transmitted infections? 2. What are common signs and symptoms of sexually transmitted infections? 3. If someone engages in sexual activity, what can they do to lower their risk of sexually transmitted infections? 	
<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group agreements and community resources posters • Graffiti sheets or poster paper (pre-labeled with titles from Activity 3) • Markers • STI Student Reference Sheet (one copy per student) • Anonymous questions sheets, pencils 	<p>Assessment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation in “STI Graffiti Sheets” activity and discussion 2. Responses to “STI Recap” activity <hr/> <p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introductions & Group Agreements (5 min) 2. Introduction of STIs (10 min) 3. STI Graffiti Sheets (25 min) 4. STI Recap (10 min) 5. Closure (10 min)
<p>Utah State Core Standards: HEALTH I: MIDDLE SCHOOL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard HI.HD.3: Define and describe the mental, emotional, physical, and social benefits of practicing sexual abstinence. (<i>Activity 3: STI Graffiti Sheets, Activity 4: STI Recap</i>) • Standard HI.HD.5: Identify common reproductive conditions and diseases, including cancers. (<i>Activity 3: STI Graffiti Sheets</i>) • Standard HI.HD.6: Identify practices for prevention of common sexually transmitted diseases/infections (STD/STI). Define and discuss sexual abstinence as it relates to STD/STI prevention. Compare and contrast the effectiveness of various risk-reducing behaviors, including condoms, as a method of preventing STD/STI. (<i>Activity 3: STI Graffiti Sheets, Activity 4: STI Recap</i>) • Standard HI.HD.7: Identify accurate and credible sources of information about sexual health, development, relationships, harassment, and abuse and identify who and where to turn to for help (for example, parent, relative, clergy, health care provider, teacher, counselor). (<i>Activity 1: Introductions, Activity 5: Closure</i>) 	

1. Introductions & Group Agreements (5 min)

Introduce facilitators and lesson. Introduce (or review) group agreements. Lead student introductions if needed. If class is part of a series, ask students to recap what they remember from the previous class. Post community resources in the space for students to reference.

2. Introduction of STIs (10 min)

Tell students: Today we will be learning about sexually transmitted infections, or STIs. We'll be looking at what STIs are, risks for getting STIs and how to prevent and treat STIs.

Facilitator Note: Write the key terms on the board as you discuss.

Sometimes, people hear the term STD instead of STI. What does "STD" stand for? *Sexually Transmitted Disease*. And what does "STI" stand for? *Sexually Transmitted Infection*. Both terms refer to the same thing but saying "STI" is one way to use language to build a more positive mentality toward taking care of our bodies and our health.

Sometimes when we talk about STIs people may be thinking "*how embarrassing*." It's true that we don't talk about these a lot. And we know that shame can prevent people from talking about their health needs openly or seeking the resources they need to stay healthy. We want to share accurate information and to reduce stigma related to sexual health, including STIs. The terms "STI" and "STD" are synonyms, but we will use "STI" throughout the lesson.

3. STI Graffiti Sheets (25 min)

Tell students: Now we're going to spend some time learning about STIs. Hang poster paper around the room with the following statements:

- Some STIs I know are...
- Someone is at risk for getting an STI if they...
- Someone can protect themselves from STIs by...
- Someone knows they have an STI if...
- Some myths about STIs are...
- Some barriers to preventing STIs in our community are...

Give markers and ask students to move around the room, writing information that finishes the sentence on each poster. Encourage each student to try to write something on each poster. This can be whatever they know, even if they are not sure

if it is correct. Tell students that you will be discussing the answers as a class when everyone is finished.

When the students have finished, collect posters at the front of the room so they are visible to everyone. Before discussing the posters, pass out the **STI Student Reference Sheet** to each student. Explain that they can use this handout as a reference during and after class. They will keep their paper, so they can write or mark on it if they want to take extra notes or highlight information during class discussion about STIs.

Starting with the list of STIs, add or correct information on each poster. Facilitate discussion with each poster, using the questions below, or create your own based on the specific class needs and interests.

Facilitator Note: *To adapt this activity for physical accessibility, pass out one graffiti sheet per table group. Have each group work at their tables to brainstorm ideas for their individual poster. After a few minutes, graffiti sheets can be rotated around the room so that each table group works on each poster. Alternately, color-coded sticky notes can be used to collect student responses for each poster.*

Suggested Discussion Questions & Topics

- **Some STIs I know are...**
 - Add STIs if they are missing from the list. *Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Syphilis, Trichomoniasis, Public Lice, Scabies, HPV, Herpes, HIV and Hepatitis B.*
 - Are all STIs preventable? Yes.
 - Are all STIs treatable? Yes.
 - Are all STIs curable? No.
 - Which STIs are curable (can-get-rid-of)? Which are non-curable (cannot-get-rid-of)? What is the difference between these two groups? *Curable STIs are bacterial/parasitic and non-curable STIs are viral. Even though people who get viral STIs will have them for life, there is always something they can do to help themselves feel better by managing their symptoms. There is also always something they can do protect themselves from further infection and prevent transmission to their partners.*
- **Someone is at risk for STIs if...**
 - How are STIs transmitted?
 - *Body Fluids: blood, semen, pre-ejaculate, vaginal fluid, anal fluid, breastmilk. More often transmitted by body fluids: HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, Chlamydia, Gonorrhea and Trichomoniasis.*
 - *Skin-to-Skin Contact: genital-to-genital and mouth-to-genital. More often transmitted by skin to skin contact: Herpes, HPV, Syphilis, Pubic Lice and Scabies.*

- *Three basic ways: unprotected sexual activity, sharing needles and pregnancy/birth/breastfeeding.*
- **Someone can protect themselves from STIs by...**
 - Practicing abstinence consistently.
 - Condoms (and other barrier methods such as dental dams and gloves) offer protection against some STIs, but abstinence is the most effective.
 - Avoiding skin-to-skin contact, especially in the genital area. A condom does not always cover the infected area.
 - Avoiding exchange of body fluids.
 - Vaccines are available for all genders for HPV and Hepatitis B.
 - PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) and PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) are pills that prevent HIV infection.
 - Limiting the number of sexual partners.
 - Getting tested and treated.
- **Someone knows they have an STI if...**
 - What are common symptoms of STIs? *Burning, itching, bumps, discharge, etc.*
 - Do STIs always have symptoms? *Almost all STIs can have NO SYMPTOMS whatsoever.*
 - If someone has no symptoms, how would they find out they had an STI? *They would have to get tested. Testing can look like a physical exam, urine or blood sample, or tissue or fluid swab. Often, a person can access free or low-cost testing at a community clinic. Regular testing is recommended for those who are in contact with another person's body fluids that transmit STIs. Bacterial and parasitic STIs can be treated and cured with antibiotics and other medication. Viral STIs can be treated with medication to manage symptoms.*
- **Some myths about STIs are...**
 - They can be transmitted through saliva or urine, from toilet seats or by sharing utensils and drinks.
 - Peeing after sex prevents STIs. *It can help prevent UTIs (Urinary Tract Infections), but not STIs.*
 - If someone has an STI, that means they've had sex.
 - Only people who have lots of sex or sex with lots of people can get STIs.
 - You can tell if someone has an STI by looking at them. *Most often, people will not show any signs or symptoms of an STI. In addition, some people are stereotyped as the "kind of person" who would have an STI, but this is always harmful and wrong. It is true that some groups have higher rates of STIs. This isn't because of who people are or their behaviors; it's because society creates extreme challenges for some groups that affect their health (such as discrimination due to racism, sexism or homophobia).*
 - PID (Pelvic Inflammatory Disease) is an STI. *PID is a secondary infection caused, most likely, by untreated Chlamydia or Gonorrhea.*

- **Some barriers to preventing STIs in our community are...**
 - Peer pressure
 - Lack of education
 - Lack of access to health care such as testing and treatment (i.e. too far away, economic or language barriers)
 - Drug use / addiction
 - Sexual abuse / assault

- Ask: What can people do to overcome these barriers?

4. STI Recap (10 min)

Read aloud statements from the options below. Ask students to decide if each statement is True or False (they are all true). Have students write down their answers on a piece of paper, then turn to a partner to check their answers. Review the correct answers as a class.

1. Choose **at least one** of the following statements related to stigma:
 - "Over 50% of U.S. high school students have not had intercourse." *True.*
 - "It is possible for anyone to become infected with an STI, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation or other identities." *True.*
 - "People who have STIs can live long lives and have fulfilling relationships." *True.*
 - "All people deserve access to information and care to help them prevent and treat STIs." *True.*
2. Choose **at least one** of the following statements related to risk:
 - "A person can get an STI from oral sex." *True.*
 - "A person can get the same STI more than once." *True.*
 - "Pre-ejaculate, vaginal fluid and blood are some of the fluids that can transmit STIs." *True.*
 - "50% of new STI infections each year are in young people ages 15-24." *True.*
3. Choose **at least one** of the following statements related to prevention:
 - "Abstinence can be practiced by anyone at any time in their life." *True.*
 - "A person who is under 18 years old can get tested for STIs." *True.*
 - "Open communication with a partner is one way to lower STI risk and build a healthy relationship." *True.*

6. Closure (10 min)

Thank students for their participation and respect while learning about this topic. Check again for remaining comments or questions by instructing all students to turn in an anonymous question sheet. After answering the number of questions that time

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allows, let students know that you'll be around afterward if they have a question they'd like to ask you individually. Refer students to the community resources poster and their trusted adults.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIS)

POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS OF AN STI INCLUDE ITCHINESS, BUMPS/BLISTERS, OR PAIN WHEN URINATING. HOWEVER, **THE MOST COMMON SYMPTOM IS NO SYMPTOMS AT ALL! THE ONLY WAY TO KNOW STI STATUS IS TO GET TESTED.** IF A TEST IS POSITIVE, TREATMENT HELPS PREVENT LONG-TERM COMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER STI TRANSMISSION.

STI	TYPE	CURABLE / TREATABLE	TRANSMISSION	PROTECTION / PREVENTION	TESTING
CHLAMYDIA	Bacterial	Curable with Antibiotics	Fluid Exchange: Pre-Ejaculate, Semen and Vaginal Fluid	Abstinence, Condoms, Dental Dams, Gloves	Tissue/Fluid Swab or Urine Sample
GONORRHEA	Bacterial	Curable with Antibiotics	Fluid Exchange: Pre-Ejaculate, Semen and Vaginal Fluid	Abstinence, Condoms, Dental Dams, Gloves	Tissue/Fluid Swab or Urine Sample
SYPHILIS	Bacterial	Curable with Antibiotics	Skin-to-Skin: Mouth-to-Genital or Genital-to-Genital	Abstinence, Condoms, Dental Dams	Blood Test
TRICHOMONIASIS	Parasitic	Curable with Antibiotics	Fluid Exchange: Pre-Ejaculate, Semen and Vaginal Fluid	Abstinence, Condoms, Dental Dams, Gloves	Tissue/Fluid Swab or Urine Sample
PUBIC LICE & SCABIES	Parasitic	Curable with Medication and Washing Bedding / Clothes	Skin-to-Skin During Sexual Contact or Other Intimate Contact (i.e. Bedding)	Abstinence, Limiting Sexual Partners	Visual Exam

STI	TYPE	CURABLE / TREATABLE	TRANSMISSION	PROTECTION / PREVENTION	TESTING
HPV (GENITAL WARTS)	Viral	Treatable	Skin-to-Skin: <i>Mouth-to-Genital or Genital-to-Genital</i>	Abstinence, Vaccines, Condoms, Dental Dams	Visual Exam or Pap Test <i>(for people with vaginas)</i>
HERPES (I & II)	Viral	Treatable	Skin-to-Skin: <i>Mouth-to-Genital or Genital-to-Genital (With or Without Blisters Present)</i>	Abstinence, Condoms, Dental Dams	Visual Exam, Fluid Swab or Blood Test
HIV	Viral	Treatable with Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART)	Fluid Exchange: <i>Pre-Ejaculate, Semen, Vaginal Fluid, Anal Fluid, Blood and Breastmilk</i>	Abstinence, PrEP/PEP, Condoms, Dental Dams	Blood Test or Oral Swab <i>(Results from Rapid Test in 10 Min)</i>
HEPATITIS B	Viral	Treatable	Fluid Exchange: <i>Pre-Ejaculate, Semen, Vaginal Fluid and Blood</i>	Abstinence, Vaccines, Condoms, Dental Dams	Blood Test

FIND A CLINIC:
slco.org/health/std-clinic
www.utahids.org
www.ppau.org
Ask about confidential and free/low-cost care!

ASK YOUR PROVIDER:
 No single test can identify all STIs. Ask what your test is for.

NOW YOU KNOW!
 Peeling after sex can help prevent a UTI (Urinary Tract Infection), but not an STI.

WINDOW PERIOD:
 It takes time between exposure and when test results will be accurate. This time varies for each STI and ranges from days to weeks.