## Teacher Refresher Information



**Key Stage 4**

STIs are contracted by having close sexual contact with someone who is already infected. Some STIs can be treated and cured with antibiotic medicine whereas others cannot. Many symptoms of incurable STIs can be treated to make them easier to live with. There are over 25 different STIs.

Bacterial STIs are caused when bacteria are spread through vaginal, oral or anal sexual contact with an infected person. These infections include chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis and are generally cured through antibiotic therapy.

Viral infections can be spread via the same routes as bacterial infections but can also be spread through direct contact with infected skin or bodily fluids such as blood, semen or saliva from an infected person entering into the bloodstream of an uninfected person. Viral infections include genital warts, hepatitis B, herpes and HIV which although they can be treated, are NOT curable.

Although most STIs are generally transmitted through sexual encounters, some of these infections can be transmitted in other ways as well as sexually. For example hepatitis B, C and HIV can be spread to others by sharing needles and syringes or are transferred from mother to unborn baby during pregnancy and childbirth. HIV can also be spread through breast milk. It is important to note that an HIV positive person who is on treatment and their viral load is undetectable cannot transmit HIV to another person.

Details on the most common STIs are available in a MS PowerPoint presentation at e-bug.eu/eng/KS4/lesson/STIs. It is important to note that people can have an STI but have NO obvious symptoms; they themselves may not know they are infected.

Anyone can contract an STI. Most people who contract an STI do not know that the person they have sexual contact with is infected. When discussing sexual health with students, it is important everyone feels comfortable, safe, and heard. Here are some ground rules to follow:

* No one (teacher or student) will have to answer a personal question
* No one will be forced to take part in a discussion
* Only the correct names for body parts will be used (you may wish to ask pupils to use the correct word if they can but if not, to use the word they know and then provide the STIs are contracted by having close sexual contact with someone who is already infected. Some STIs can be treated and cured with antibiotic medicine whereas others cannot. Many symptoms of incurable STIs can be treated to make them easier to live with. There are over 25 different STIs.
* Bacterial STIs are caused when bacteria are spread through vaginal, oral or anal sexual contact with an infected person. These infections include chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis and are generally cured through antibiotic therapy.
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* Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way
* Others (as agreed by class)
* **Chlamydia**
* Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by bacteria called *Chlamydia trachomatis*. The highest incidence of chlamydia is amongst 16-24-year olds. Of this group approximately one in ten is thought to be infected. About 70% of females and 50% of males with chlamydia don’t experience any symptoms at all which means that many infected people don’t realise they carry the infection. For women who do experience symptoms these might include abnormal discharge, pain and/or bleeding during sex and pain when urinating. In men these include a cloudy or watery discharge from the tip of the penis, pain when urinating and testicular pain.
* Diagnosis can be made using a sample of urine (males and females) or vaginal swab (females only). Infection is treatable with a one-week course of antibiotics. Untreated chlamydia is a well-established cause of pelvic inflammatory disease (serious inflammation of the ovaries and fallopian tubes), ectopic pregnancy (when a foetus grows in a fallopian tube) and infertility in women. In men infection can cause prostate and testicular problems, and a growing body of evidence also links chlamydia to infertility in men.
* Although chlamydia is a serious and growing public health problem, there are a number of characteristics of this infection which may mean that young people may not find it particularly threatening.
* In making a decision about whether to use condoms, young people most likely weigh up the consequences. Some of these will be positive such as protecting against STIs but there are likely to be many more negative ones (such as “it interrupts the mood”). Often the negative consequences can outweigh the positive ones, so that motivations to use condoms are not particularly strong.
* To counteract this and bolster intentions to use condoms, it is very important that young people have accurate perceptions of the threat caused by STIs. This lesson has been designed to encourage strong and realistic perceptions of the threat caused by chlamydia and to provide students with the opportunity to explore the issues around negotiating safer sex.
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To counteract this and bolster intentions to use condoms, it is very important that young people have accurate perceptions of the threat caused by STIs. This lesson has been designed to encourage strong and realistic perceptions of the threat caused by chlamydia and to provide students with the opportunity to explore the issues around negotiating safer sex.

# Teacher Answers

## SW2 STI Misconceptions

Also available in TS1

I can’t get an STI from oral sex

*False.* Although the risk of getting an STI through oral sex is generally less than from vaginal or anal sex, there is still a risk. The infections most commonly passed on through oral sex are herpes simplex, gonorrhoea and syphilis.

I can get herpes from a toilet seat

*False*. Herpes simplex virus (HSV) is spread by direct contact of mucous membranes (the soft tissue located at your genitals and mouth) with a herpes sore, saliva, or genital secretions of a person with a herpes infection. Transmission of herpes usually occurs during kissing, or oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

Getting an STI test is painful and embarrassing

*False*. Many STI tests are as quick and easy as giving a urine sample. Some tests might also involve having blood taken, a visual examination to look for signs of infection, or using a swab (like a smaller, soft and rounded cotton bud) on the genital area. If a swab is needed, some services will offer you the option of using it yourself. Health professionals carry out sexual health check-ups every day – and they don’t look at an STI test as a reflection on your behaviour, but as a responsible health choice.

The pill can protect you from contracting STIs

*False.* The contraceptive pill is effective against preventing pregnancy. It is not effective against protecting against STIs.

People with many sexual partners have STIs

*False.* STIs do not discriminate against the number of partners a person may have. Anyone can get a STI, it doesn’t matter if you have one partner or multiple. STIs can be passed through unprotected sex.

STIs will go away on their own

*False.* It is unlikely that an STI will go away by itself. Getting tested is the first step in seeking treatment for an STI. Delaying treatment could lead to unintended long-term consequences.

## SW4 Sexual Health Bingo – Caller Cards (TS2)

STI - STI stands for Sexually Transmitted Infection

Protection - The best form of protection from STIs is condoms

Oral - Condoms can help you stay safe during oral sex

Painless - Getting a sexual health test is painless

Common – It’s pretty common for someone to have an STI and not know about it

Symptoms – Most of the time, people who get STIs don’t have symptoms

Free – Most of the time, sexual health tests are free

Urine – The most common STI test for young people is a urine sample

Confidential – STI tests are completely confidential

Quick – Getting a sexual health test is quick

Treated – Most STIs can be treated with no dramas whatsoever

Better – If you have an STI, the earlier you start treatment, the better

Check-up - Getting tested for STIs should be part of your normal health check-up

Sex - If you’re having sex you can keep it safe by always using a condom

Condoms - Condoms are the only form of protection that prevent pregnancy and STIs

Tested - If you’re having sex, stay safe by testing for STIs regularly

Untreated- Infections that are left untreated can lead to long term negative consequences. The sooner you start treatment, the better.

Anyone- Anyone can get an STI, and they may not know they have one! This is why testing is so important.

Plan- Plan with your sexual partner how you will protect yourself from STIs. This may be by using a condom and agreeing to both get tested.

Contact- Sexual contact can result in catching an STI. Testing and using a condom will reduce this risk.

Lubricant- Lubricant can be used to improve the experience of sex. However, make sure you use a water based lubricant to avoid weakening a condom.

Easy- This word is sometimes used negatively to explain why some people might get an STI. But this is absolutely not true. Anyone can get an STI.

The Pill- the pill is a form of contraception that can prevent pregnancy. However, it does not protect against STIs.

Breaks- If a condom breaks during sex, it will no longer protect you from STIs.

## SW5 STI Quiz

How can sexually transmitted infections spread?

* Vaginal sex
* Anal sex
* Oral sex

Who can contract an STI?

* Anyone who has unprotected sex

Do sexually transmitted infections have symptoms?

* It depends on the infection

The BEST way to prevent transmission of sexually transmitted infections is?

* Condoms

Note: the best way to prevent any transmission of STIs is abstinence.

Which of the following are STIs?

* Chlamydia
* Gonorrhoea