

# GETTING TO KNOW STBBIs

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# WHAT ARE STBBIs?

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STBBIs are Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections (STBBIs).  
They include the following:

- chlamydia
- gonorrhoea
- syphilis
- genital herpes
- hepatitis B and hepatitis C
- human papilloma virus (HPV)
- human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/AIDS

Anyone can catch an STBBI!  
Your behaviours can increase  
your risks of getting one!

For more information  
on condoms and STBBIs,  
go to [ITSS.gouv.qc.ca](http://ITSS.gouv.qc.ca)

YOU MEAN  
I MIGHT HAVE AN

**STBBI**

AND I MIGHT NOT  
EVEN KNOW IT?

Most of the time, people who have an STBBI don't have any particular signs or symptoms. Therefore, you and your partners might have an STBBI and not know it.

Yes, you might!

As soon as you have sexual contacts or plan to have any, you should be concerned about STBBIs.

Every time you have unprotected sexual contact, you are at risk of catching an STBBI.

If you are between 15 and 24 years old, you're in an age group that is especially affected by some STBBIs:

- chlamydia
- gonorrhoea
- syphilis
- HPV

# HOW DO YOU CATCH AN STBBI?



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## Modes of STBBI transmission

	Chlamydia	Gonorrhoea	Syphilis	Genital herpes	Hepatitis B	Hepatitis C	HPV	HIV/AIDS
When there is sexual contact without a condom: 1) with or without penetration of the penis into the vagina or anus;	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
2) during an oral-genital relation (stimulation of genitals with the mouth);		✓	✓	✓				
3) during skin-to-skin contact;			✓	✓			✓	
4) while sharing a sex toy.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
When sharing drug or steroid injection equipment					✓	✓		✓
When getting a tattoo or piercing with non-sterile equipment					✓	✓		✓

# HOW CAN I FIND OUT IF I HAVE AN STBBI?

You have nothing to fear from a screening test. Often, only a urine sample is needed. Sometimes a sample of your blood or secretions might be needed.

The only way to find out if you have an STBBI is to see a doctor or a nurse to get a screening test.

It's impossible to tell if people have an STBBI by how they look, even if you know them well.

**Most of the time, people who have an STBBI don't have any particular signs or symptoms.**



When there are symptoms, they differ from one STBBI to another. Symptoms include itching, burning sensation (when urinating) or abnormal discharge, bleeding from genitals, and lower abdomen or genital pain.

# I THINK I HAVE AN **STBBI** WHAT SHOULD I DO?

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If you think you have an STBBI,  
get a screening test.

If you are 14 years old  
or over, you can get  
a screening test  
without having to tell  
your parents.

## RESSOURCES

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For answers to your questions about STBBIs, how to protect yourself, finding a place where you can get tested or where to get condoms, you can:

- talk to the school nurse;
- talk to a nurse or doctor at your CLSC or at a medical clinic;
- call Info-Santé at 8-1-1;
- go to [ITSS.gouv.qc.ca](http://ITSS.gouv.qc.ca), where you'll find information about condoms and STBBI;
- contact Tel-jeunes:
  - [teljeunes.com](http://teljeunes.com),
  - Telephone: 1-800-263-2266,
  - Text message: 514-600-1002.

Getting tested and treated for STBBI quickly helps avoid complications.

# WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I HAVE AN STBBI?

If you have an STBBI:

- you'll be given the right treatment, if there is one;
- you'll have to stop having sex for a while, until the treatment is finished;
- you'll have to tell your recent sex partners (the nurse or doctor can help you);
- you might feel pain since some STBBIs can cause pain;
- you might have various feelings: worries, guilt, shame, anger, etc.;
- you might need to talk about these feelings to someone (see the Ressources section);
- you might be infected for life because there is no cure for some STBBIs;
- you might not be able to have children.

You can catch these infections more than once, even if you've been treated for one of them.

# Bacteria

Infections	Symptoms	Possible consequences	Treatment
CHLAMYDIA AND GONORRHOEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Often, no symptoms.</li> </ul> Possible symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ genital discharge;</li> <li>▪ abnormal bleeding from the vagina;</li> <li>▪ pain when you urinate or during sex.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Persistent stomach pain.</li> <li>▪ Difficulty having children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can be cured.</li> <li>▪ Antibiotic treatment for these infections are free.</li> </ul>
SYPHILIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Often, no symptoms</li> </ul> Possible symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ sore in the genital area or mouth, skin rash, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Severe brain or heart disorders.</li> </ul>	

# Virus

Infections	Symptoms	Possible consequences	Treatment
GENITAL HERPES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Often, no symptoms.</li></ul> Possible symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>small painful sores on or near the genital area (thigh, buttock, scrotum, vulva).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lesions that appear and disappear repeatedly.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cannot be cured.</li><li>Treatments exist to relieve or prevent symptoms.</li></ul>
HEPATITIS B* AND C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Often, no symptoms.</li></ul> Possible symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>general discomfort (fatigue, nausea, lower abdomen pain, etc.).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cirrhosis or liver cancer.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sometimes gets cleared naturally.</li><li>Treatment can be prescribed when necessary.</li></ul>
HPV*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Often, no symptoms.</li></ul> Possible symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>for some HPV: small warts on or near the genital or anal area.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>For some HPV: cancer of the cervix, vagina, vulva, penis, anus, rectum or throat.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Warts often disappear on their own.</li><li>Treatment can be prescribed when necessary.</li></ul>
HIV/AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Often, no symptoms.</li></ul> Possible symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>general discomfort (fever, fatigue, headaches, sore throat, etc.).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>If no treatment, weakening immune system has major health impacts.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cannot be cured.</li><li>Medications exist to control the infection.</li></ul>

\*There are vaccines to prevent these infections.

# STBBIs

## BETTER TO AVOID THEM

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# HOW CAN I REDUCE MY RISK OF GETTING AN STBBI?



You can reduce your risk of getting an STBBI:

- if you use a condom for each sexual contact (oral, vaginal, anal) and with all your sex partners;
- if you and your partner get tested before you stop using condoms;
- if you get vaccinated against HPV and hepatitis B;
- if you are careful when using alcohol or drugs since this can make you forget to use a condom;
- if you avoid using drugs and steroids or, if you do, you don't share your injection equipment.

# WHAT DOESN'T PROTECT ME AGAINST STBBIs?

Despite what you might believe, you won't be protected against STBBIs:

- if you stop using condoms, without first getting tested, a few weeks after you start going out with your partner;
- if you know your partner well;
- if you say that it's okay not to use condoms this time;
- if the penis is taken out before ejaculation;
- if you put a condom on after sexual contact has begun;
- if you think you're safe because you've never caught anything;
- if you're in love;
- if you've never had sex;
- if you think of yourself or of the other person as reliable;
- if you use a contraceptive method without a condom (e.g. the pill).



To protect against STBBIs and pregnancy, use a condom as well as another contraceptive method.

# HERE'S A TIP

ALWAYS HAVE A FEW CONDOMS ON HAND

- one in case you don't get it quite right (you put it on inside-out or it breaks);
- one to have sex;
- others, in case you want to do it again...



Ribbed, coloured, thinner, thicker, flavoured... It's not that there's a lack of choice. You just have to try different kinds to find out what you like!

# FOR THE \*BEST CONDOM\* EXPERIENCE

You can get condoms at school, at a youth centre, or from a friend, your parents or your brothers and sisters.

- you look at it and handle it to become familiar with it before the big day;
- you practice putting it on so you'll feel more confident before you start having sex;
- you find the type of condom that suits you;
- you check the packaging for the expiry date;
- you keep condoms away from heat and friction;
- you talk about it with your partner;
- you take a few seconds to put it on the erected penis before any sexual contact;
- you use a water-based or silicone lubricant (avoid oil-based or petroleum jelly-based substances).

# RIISING TO THE OCCASION: THE HOW-TO OF CONDOM USE

1. Open the packet carefully.
2. Check which direction the condom should be unrolled.
3. Remove any air by squeezing the tip of the condom.
4. Pinch the tip of the condom and roll it out to the base of the penis.
5. Enjoy yourself.
6. After ejaculation, withdraw the penis while holding the base of the condom.
7. Remove the condom.
8. Throw the condom away.



EDITION

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Legal deposit: Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2013

ISBN: 978-2-550-68890-7 (print version)  
978-2-550-68889-1 (PDF)

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