

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION INFORMATION AND PREVENTION



LESSON INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this lesson is to define and examine common STIs/STDs and allow students to explore resources for treatment. Students will also analyze their individual responsibility regarding getting tested for STIs/STDs, understand why it is important to get tested for STIs/STDs, as well as inform partners about STIs/STDs and HIV status. Students will also be able to advocate for sexually active peers to get tested and treated for STIs/STDs/HIV.



OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to...

- Identify common STIs/STDs and their characteristics
- Explore local and national resources for STI/STD treatment
- Analyze why it is important to get yourself tested for STIs/STDs
- Demonstrate skill of accessing valid health info using the **ACCESS** method
- Demonstrate skill of advocacy skill using the **ICARE** method



VOCABULARY

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| • Abdominal | • Genital |
| • Anal sex | • Genital warts |
| • Anus | • Gonorrhea |
| • Asymptomatic | • Hepatitis |
| • Bacterial Vaginosis | • Herpes |
| • Cervix | • HIV |
| • Chancre | • HPV |
| • Chlamydia | • Latex |
| • Chronic | • Oral sex |
| • Communicable | • Pap test |
| • Discharge | • Pelvic |
| • Fatigue | • Pubic lice |
| • STI/STD | • Syphilis |
| • Sterility | • Transmit |
| • Symptoms | • Trichomoniasis |
| • Vaginal sex | |

GRADE: High School

LENGTH OF LESSON: 60 min

SEQUENCE: 5



ACTIVITIES:

- 5.1** Anonymous Question Box
- 5.2** STI/STD Investigation
- 5.3** Graffiti Sheets: Get Yourself Tested
- 5.4** Advocating for Testing



MATERIALS/TECHNOLOGY:

- CDC STD Fact Sheets (Printed or Accessed Online): https://www.cdc.gov/std/healthcomm/fact_sheets.htm
- Worksheet: STI/STD Demonstration of Understanding
- Handout: STD Matrix Sheet (one per group) – to be printed single-sided, cut in half (left side: term STD cards; right side: definitional STD cards), and into individual cards
- Assessment Rubric
- 5 pieces of butcher block paper
- Flip chart paper with headings



STANDARDS:

Wisconsin Standard for Health Education

- Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid health information and products and services to enhance health.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family and community health.

National Sexuality Education Standards

- **SH.12.CC.1** Describe common symptoms of and treatment for STIs/STDs, including HIV.
- **SH.12.ADV.1** Advocate for sexually active youth to get STD/HIV testing and treatment.
- **SH.12.SM.1** Analyze individual responsibility about testing for and informing partners about STIs/STDs and HIV status.
- **SH.12.AI.1** Explain how to access local STD and HIV prevention and testing.
- **SH.12.AI.2** Access medically-accurate prevention information about STIs/STDs, including HIV.
- **SH.12.IC.1** Demonstrate skills to communicate with a partner about STD and HIV prevention and testing.



Activity 5.1: Anonymous Question Box (5 minutes)

Take a moment to check in on the ground rules for the Human Growth and Development unit. If there are questions in the anonymous question box, answer them using the **Answering Difficult Questions Protocol**. Remind students that the box will be available throughout the Human Growth and Development unit.



Activity 5.2: STI/STD Investigation (30 minutes)

Define an STI/STD as an infection or disease that is passed through sexual contact that could involve vaginal, oral or anal sex. State that most STIs/STDs do not show symptoms immediately. Explain that one of the responsibilities of becoming sexually active is keeping yourself and partner safe and healthy. Preventing STIs/STDs is part of this responsibility. Another responsibility is communicating about your sexual health status honestly. Tell the class that most STIs/STDs are found among people ages 15-24. Let them know that 25%, or 1 in 4, teens in the U.S. will get an STI/STD during their teenage years.¹ Remind students that the best form of prevention is abstinence.

Ask students to identify those STIs/STDs they have heard about and list them on the board. The most common ones are:

- Bacterial Vaginosis
- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhea
- Hepatitis
- Herpes
- HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)
- Genital warts/HPV (human papillomavirus)
- Pubic lice
- Syphilis
- Trichomoniasis (Trich)

Explain that today's lesson explores basic information about the most common STIs/STDs, and more importantly, they will identify resources for STI/STD testing and treatment in or near their community. Let them know that some of the important facts about STIs/STDs to know are:

- How do you get it?
- How do you know if you have it?
- Can it be cured?
- Where can you get tested and treated?
- What can happen if you don't get treated?
- How can you prevent it or lower your risk?

¹ Cates JR, Herndon NL, Schulz S L, Darroch JE. (2004). Our voices, our lives, our futures: Youth and sexually transmitted diseases. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

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Ask the students if they know any symptoms of the listed STIs/STDs or how they are treated. Add that information to the board. Reference the [CDC STD Fact Sheets](#) for Complete Functional Health Information.

Explain that when searching the internet, you need to make sure you are using a valid, reliable resource for information. One can't just type a term into a search engine and then click on the first website that is listed.

Talk about how reliable, valid resources list references for their information, come from a published journal, or a government source. Encourage students to look outside of the CDC website to find information if they get their assignment done. Use the following acronym² to teach students how to identify reliable sources of information:

A - Is it **accurate**?

C - Is it **credible**?

C - Is it **current**?

E - Is it **easy** to use and access?

S - What **situations** is it best used in?

S - Are claims or information **supported** by scientific evidence?

As a demonstration, ask students to go to the Centers for Disease Control Website (www.cdc.gov). Ask them where they think they could go on the CDC website to find the information they need regarding STIs/STDs (diseases and conditions). Tell them you had them go to this website because it is a reliable source.

Divide the class into even groups. Give each group an even amount of term STD cards (left column of [STD Matrix Sheet](#)) without the definitions on them.

² Benes, S. & Alperin, H. (2016). The essentials of teaching health education: Curriculum, Instruction, and assessment. Human Kinetics: Champaign, IL.

My Sexual Health: My Future

If you have access to a computer lab, tell students they are going to research the STIs/STDs named on the cards they received. Their task is to use a reliable source, such as the CDC, to describe the STI/STD they were assigned, and to answer at least two of the following questions:

- How common is this STI/STD in adolescents?
- What are the symptoms of this STI/STD?
- How serious? Can it be cured?
- How is this STI/STD spread?
- How can this STI/STD be prevented?

Students should write their information on the back of the cards.

Get the group back together and discuss what the students found.

Ask the students the following questions to further the discussion if there is time:

- What did you notice about various STI/STD symptoms? (That many of the symptoms are the same...)
- What STIs/STDs are not curable? (Herpes, HIV) What does that tell you about those STIs/STDs? (That they are caused by a virus rather than bacteria)
- What is the greatest risk of not seeking treatment for an STI/STD? (In the case of HIV, it could turn into AIDS and the risk is death. Syphilis carries the risk of brain damage/death in advanced stages or blindness in ocular syphilis. The most common STIs/STDs for teens carry the risk of infertility.)

Review that the best and most common way to prevent STIs/STDs is abstinence, but if you want to have sexual intercourse a latex barrier (condoms, dental dams) will help prevent STIs/STDs when used correctly.

Now give students the informational STD cards (right column of the **STD Matrix Sheet**). Allow students to staple the information together for future use.

 Activity 5.2: STD Matrix Sheet

Chlamydia

What is it? A sexually transmitted infection that occurs in males and females.
How common? It is very common, particularly in sexually active young people ages 15-24.
Symptoms? Often people do not have symptoms. But if they do they can include abnormal discharge, burning sensation when urinating.
How serious? Can it be cured? If untreated, it can spread to the female reproductive organs and lead to inability to get pregnant or a greater risk for a pregnancy in the fallopian tubes (ectopic pregnancy). Having this may also raise the risk of getting other STIs/STDs like HIV.
How is it spread? Is spread through anal, oral, or vaginal sex with an infected person. A baby can get it via an infected mother during childbirth.
How can it be prevented? Abstinence, or being in a long term, monogamous relationship where both people have been tested and are negative for STIs/STDs, and using latex condoms correctly every time during oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

Gonorrhea

What is it? A sexually transmitted infection that occurs in males and females.
How common? Is more common in young people ages 15-24.
Symptoms? Symptoms include a burning sensation when urinating, and white, yellow or green discharge from the penis or vagina. Females often do not have symptoms but may also have bleeding between periods.
How serious? Can it be cured? Can be cured with antibiotics, but in some areas, there are strains that are resistant to antibiotics. If left untreated, it can create scar tissue in the reproductive organs for both males and females, leading to pain and possibly infertility.
How is it spread? Having oral, anal or vaginal sex with someone that has the STI/STD.
How can it be prevented? Abstinence, or being in a long term, monogamous relationship where both people have been tested and are negative for STIs/STDs, and using latex condoms correctly every time during oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

Syphilis

What is it? An STD that can cause long term complications if not treated.

How common? Is more common in some populations. Males who have sex with other males and people who are HIV positive may be more susceptible.

Symptoms? There are three stages. The early stages involve a sore called at the site of infection, usually on the genitals, anus, or inside the mouth. After this goes away, the second stage usually involves a skin rash and/or sores in the mouth, anus, or vagina.

How serious? Can it be cured? This STD can be passed to a fetus, resulting in low birth weight or death. This STD occurs 10-30 years after infection and can result in death. This can be cured with the right antibiotics, but any damage caused by the disease cannot be undone.

How is it spread? Is spread through direct contact with the sores of an infected person or during pregnancy to the fetus.

How can it be prevented? Abstinence is best, or being in a long term, monogamous relationship where both people have been tested and are negative for STIs/STDs, and using condoms correctly every time during oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)

What is it? An STD that can cause genital warts.

How common? Very common. Cervical cancer is caused by this STD.

Symptoms? Most people have no symptoms or are unaware until they have genital warts.

How serious? Can it be cured? In most cases it goes away on its own, but when it doesn't, it can cause genital warts and cancer. There is no cure.

How is it spread? Having oral, anal, or vaginal sex with someone who is infected. It can be passed even if the person with the STD has no symptoms.

How can it be prevented? This STD can be prevented by getting a vaccine.

Pubic Lice

What is it? Parasitic insects found primarily in the pubic or genital area of humans.

Symptoms? Itching and bumps in the genital area or the presence of bugs or their eggs. They are usually found in the genital area on pubic hair, but they may occasionally be found on other coarse body hair, such as hair on the legs, armpits, mustache, beard, eyebrows, or eyelashes.

How serious? Can it be cured? Difficult to get rid of but they will not cause other disease or more serious conditions.

How is it spread? Is spread through sexual contact with an infected person or through close contact with bedding, towels, or clothing of an infected person.

How can it be prevented? Abstinence is best, or being in a long term, monogamous relationship where both people have been tested and are negative for STIs/STDs. Condoms will not protect against this.

Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV) 1 and 2

What is it? An STD caused by two types of viruses.

How common? In the United States, about one out of every six people aged 14 to 49 years have this STD.

Symptoms? Most people who have this have very mild symptoms.

How serious? Can it be cured? This STD is a virus that stays in the body forever. There is no cure, but drugs are available that can prevent outbreaks or shorten them. Over time, most people have fewer outbreaks.

How is it spread? By having vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has the disease. Fluids found in a herpes sore carry the virus and contact with those fluids can cause infection.

How can it be prevented? Abstinence, or being in a long term, monogamous relationship where both people have been tested and are negative for the STD, and using latex condoms correctly every time during oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

What is it? A virus that is in the blood, breast milk, semen and vaginal fluids of infected people. The virus attacks the body's immune system.

How common? Currently 1.2 million people are living with it in the United States and nearly one in seven of them do not know they are infected.

Symptoms? When first infected, people report flu like symptoms. Eventually those symptoms go away but this is when a person is at very high risk of transmitting the virus to others.

How serious? Can it be cured? If left untreated, this will eventually progress to AIDS. There is no cure for it, but with new drug treatment (taken consistently) people are living with HIV.

How is it spread? Is spread through contact with blood, semen, or vaginal fluids of an infected person. Pregnancy and breastfeeding can also transmit it to a fetus or baby.

How can it be prevented? Abstinence, or being in a long term, monogamous relationship where both people have been tested and are negative for HIV, and using latex condoms correctly every time during oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

Hepatitis

What is it? An inflammation of the liver.

How common? The most common types of are entitled A, B, C.

Symptoms? Many people do not experience symptoms and do not know they are infected.

How serious? Can it be cured? Most people will develop a chronic lifelong infection with serious complications. However, there is now a treatment that can cure, but it is extremely expensive.

How is it spread? Is spread through contact with an infected person's blood, even in small amounts. Most often this occurs when sharing needles or even personal items like razors, toothbrushes, or nail clippers.

How can it be prevented? Take universal precautions to not be exposed to the blood of others. Never share needles, personal items that may have small amounts of blood on them, and only get tattoos or piercing in licensed shops that sterilize their equipment.

Bacterial Vaginosis

What is it? An infection caused when too much of certain bacteria change the normal balance of bacteria in the vagina.

How common? Most common in females (ages 15-24).

Symptoms? Many females do not have symptoms. If they do have symptoms, it is usually a thin white or gray vaginal discharge, odor, pain, itching, or burning in the vagina. Some women have a strong fish-like odor, especially after sex. They may also have burning when urinating, itching vaginal opening, or both.

How serious? Can it be cured? Can cause some serious health risks, including: increasing the chance of getting HIV from unprotected sex with an HIV positive person; making it more likely for a premature birth if pregnant; increasing the chance of getting other STIs/STDs, such as chlamydia and gonorrhea. Can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), which can result in fertility problems. It can be cured with antibiotics.

How is it spread? Doctors are not sure. Can be spread during sexual activity.

How can it be prevented? Abstinence, limiting the number of sex partners, not douching.

Trichomoniasis (Trich)

What is it? A sexually transmitted infection that occurs in males and females.

How common? The most common.

Symptoms? Itching or irritation in the genitals, discharge from the genitals, discomfort/burning during or after urination or ejaculation. About 30% of people infected experience symptoms.

How serious? Can it be cured? It is curable. Because of genital inflammation, it can increase the risk of contracting or transmitting other STIs/STDs.

How is it spread? The parasite passes from an infected person to an uninfected person during sex. In females, the lower genital tract (vulva, vagina, cervix, or urethra) is most commonly infected; in males, the penis.

How can it be prevented? Abstinence, or being in a long term, monogamous relationship where both people have been tested and are negative for the STI/STD, and using latex condoms correctly every time during oral, anal, or vaginal sex.



Activity 5.3: Graffiti Sheets: Get Yourself Tested (15 minutes)

Let students know that since they now know some information about common STIs/STDs they need to know what to do if they suspect they have one. Ask if students know where to go to get tested for an STI/STD.

If the internet is available, have students go to <https://gettested.cdc.gov/>. If not, let them know they can search that database to find a place to get tested near them. Next ask students to think about why it is important to get tested and what they think some of the challenges are that come with STI/STD testing.

Post flip chart paper around the room with the following headings:

- **It is important to get tested for STIs/STDs because...** (*Answers: If you don't, you could have effects from it forever. Some STIs/STDs are linked to cancer. You could give a partner one without even knowing it or get one from a partner without knowing it.*)
- **It is important to talk with sexual partners about STI/STD status because...** (*Answers: It may be on their mind too. You do not want to get an STI/STD. You may not want to be with a person if they don't want to get tested or haven't. You could go together.*)
- **Some reasons why people do get tested are...** (*Answers: They are scared. They want to know their status. They don't want to think about it. They know where to go.*)
- **If a sexual partner did not tell me they had an STI/STD I would feel...** (*Answers: Sad, angry, scared, upset, offended.*)
- **Some reasons people do not get tested are...** (*Answers: You may feel you will offend your partner or make them feel uncomfortable by asking if they have ever been tested. Or it could be that you and your partner are so quick to want to get intimate that you don't want to bother with getting tested before you start hooking up. The testing place doesn't seem friendly to me because – I am male. I am gay. I am transgender. I know someone who works there.*)

Tell students to get up and write responses to the sheets on the wall. Because there are multiple sheets, and this will be a very active few minutes, this method allows for some anonymity in answers.



Activity 5.4: Advocating for Testing (10 minutes)

Remind students a big responsibility that comes with being sexually active is knowing your sexual health status. Young people are disproportionately affected by STIs/STDs, so with the right advocacy skills, young people can help their peers to stay informed about their sexual health status and get tested. Advocacy means to support a cause – in this case, to support the cause of getting tested and knowing your sexual health status. Students can learn the skill of advocacy with the **I CARE** acronym³:

I - Identify and research a relevant and meaningful health issue.

C - Create a health-enhancing position or message that is supported by facts and evidence and is geared toward the audience.

A - Act passionately and with conviction

R - Relay your health-enhancing message to your audience

E - Evaluate the effectiveness of your advocacy effort

Using the responses from the large sheet headed with “**Some reasons people do not get tested are...**”. Have each of the groups create a scenario around one of the reasons that involves either a friend or potential sexual partner advocating for STI/STD testing. As a demonstration, recruit a student volunteer and act out how you would advocate testing to someone who is afraid they have an STI/STD and doesn't want to deal with it. Have students work in pairs to create a dialogue involving a friend trying to convince a peer to get tested, knowing the reason why is feelings of reluctance. Let students know they will demonstrate their role plays at the beginning of the **Lesson 6**.

Additionally, let students know there will be a take home worksheet to hand in at the next class.

Homework: Ask students to complete the **STI/STD Demonstration of Understanding Worksheet** to demonstrate their level of understanding of lesson objectives.

³ Ibid.



Activity 5.4: Worksheet: STI/STD Demonstration of Understanding

Student Name	
Describe 5 STIs/STDs and their common early symptoms.	
Explain why it is important for young people who are sexually active to be aware of their sexual health status.	
Describe where a young person can go to obtain STI/STD testing and treatment.	
Describe the steps for identifying valid health information using ACCESS .	
Name three reliable sources of health information online.	

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Assessment Rubric

Use the following assessment to measure student's progress toward meeting lesson objectives.

Student name:			
Learning Outcome	Not Present	Developing	On Target
Identify common STIs/STDs and their characteristics	Student participation and work reflects minimal to no understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects some understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects thorough understanding of the objective.
Explore local and national resources for STI/STD treatment	Student participation and work reflects minimal to no understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects some understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects thorough understanding of the objective.
Analyze why it is important to get yourself tested for STIs/STDs	Student participation and work reflects minimal to no understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects some understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects thorough understanding of the objective.
Demonstrate skill of accessing valid health info using the ACCESS method	Student participation and work reflects minimal to no understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects some understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects thorough understanding of the objective.
Demonstrate skill of advocacy skill using the I CARE method	Student participation and work reflects minimal to no understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects some understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects thorough understanding of the objective.
Teacher comments:			