Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infections caused by some bacteria, viruses and other organisms. They can be passed from person to person through any form of sexual activity, including vaginal, anal and oral sex. Some STIs can be passed through skin-to-skin contact alone.

**Chlamydia***
- Often has no symptoms.
- May cause pain when urinating, a discharge from the penis or vagina, or pain in the lower abdomen.
- May cause bleeding between periods and after sex.
- Can be serious as it may cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), inflammation of the testes and infertility if not treated.
- Diagnosed with a urine or swab test.
- Treated with antibiotics.

**Gonorrhoea***
- May cause burning or discharge from the penis, increased vaginal discharge or severe abdominal pain, but may sometimes have no symptoms.
- Infection of the throat may follow oral sex. There are usually no symptoms, but the infection can still be transmitted.
- Infection of the rectum causes pain and anal discharge.
- Infection of the eye causes a red, painful eye.
- May also cause PID and infertility.
- Diagnosed by urine and swab tests.
- Treated with antibiotics.

**HPV (Human Papilloma Virus)**
- May appear as lumps (genital warts) around the vulva or in the vagina, on the penis, around or inside the anus.
- They may be painless or cause some irritation/itch.
- Visible warts can be removed by freezing them or applying a wart paint.
- HPV can be present without any visible warts.
- Some types of HPV infect the cervix and over time can cause cervical cancer. These are not the same types of HPV that cause visible genital warts.
- Vaccination can prevent some types of HPV.

**Genital Herpes**
- Can be transmitted through vaginal, anal and oral sex, as well as skin-to-skin contact.
- Usually appears as small painful blisters at first, which become shallow ulcers and scab over and heal up.
- First episode is usually the worst. Some people never have another episode.
- Repeat episodes are usually milder and may come on with stress or ill health.
- Anti-viral tablets can be taken to prevent repeat episodes and reduce the risk of passing the infection to others.

**Mycoplasma Genitalium**
- May cause discharge from the penis, discomfort on urination, abnormal vaginal discharge, and bleeding between periods and after sex.
- Untreated it can cause similar complications to chlamydia and can lead to infertility.
- Diagnosed with a urine or swab test.
- Treated with antibiotics.

**Trichomonas**
- Can cause a thin, yellow-green vaginal discharge which may feel irritating and have a strong smell or a discharge from the penis, but may have no symptoms at all.
- Diagnosed by a urine or swab test.
- Treated with antibiotics.

**HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)**
- Spread by blood-to-blood contact (e.g. sharing injecting equipment) or by exchange of fluids (semen, vaginal discharge, anal mucus) during sex.
- It can be passed to a baby during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding (medications can significantly reduce this likelihood).
- People who come into contact with the virus may experience a flu-like illness for a short period.
- HIV will damage the immune system if untreated. Although there is not currently a cure, there are medications (called antiretrovirals) to prevent this damage, reduce the amount of virus in the blood and prolong life significantly.
- Diagnosed by a blood test.
- Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) is treatment that can be accessed within 72 hours of suspected exposure to HIV. Ring the PEP Hotline: 1800 022 226.

Get Checked Now
Young South Australians aged 16–30 can access an online self-screening questionnaire and a free test for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea without seeing a doctor.
Go to www.getcheckednow.com.au
Prevention of STIs

- Come prepared! Use condoms.
- Practise safer sex. Make sure you and your partner/s have had a recent STI check.
- Talk about any past infections with your sexual partner/s.
- Don’t share injecting equipment or anything that comes into contact with blood (e.g. tattoo equipment).
- When there are sores, lumps or ulcers around the mouth or genital area, or unusual discharge, avoid vaginal, anal and oral sex or any activity involving skin contact with the affected area.

Non STIs

Some nonsexually transmitted infections can also cause a discharge. These include Bacterial Vaginosis and Candida (Thrush). Although these conditions do not always require treatment, you should see a health professional if you are concerned about any changes in your discharge.

When to consult a doctor

You should see a doctor when symptoms of an STI are first noticed or if a sexual partner is diagnosed with an STI or has symptoms of an STI. Even if you have no symptoms, you can get an STI check at the doctor or sexual health clinic. Routine STI screening is recommended for any new sexual contact, or if your partner has had a new sexual contact.

CONTACT

SHINE SA

Clinic & Counselling Appointments and General Enquiries
Tel 1300 794 584
Clinic locations and times are available at www.shinesa.org.au

Sexual Healthline
Tel 1300 883 793  Country callers (toll free) 1800 188 171
Talk to a sexual health nurse about any sexual health issue.
Available 9am – 12.30pm, Monday – Friday

National Relay Service
www.relayservice.gov.au
133 677 (TTY/Voice)  1300 555 727 (Speak & Listen)  0423 677 767 (SMS Relay)