

## Bacterial Vaginosis and Yeast Infections

- Everyone has bacteria and yeast on their skin and inside their body.
- Sometimes too much grows and causes an infection. These infections are not STIs but have symptoms that are the same.
- You can have a yeast infection or Bacterial Vaginosis even if you are not having sex.
- It is very important to talk to your provider and get tested before you use an over-the-counter medicine.

### Common Symptoms affecting the Vagina or Vulva:

- Bad smell
- White or gray discharge
- Burning
- Itching
- Pain
- Soreness
- Rash
- Swelling

***Some vaginal infections may have the same symptoms but ARE NOT STIs.***



## Ask Your Healthcare Provider:

- ✓ How can I protect myself from STIs?
- ✓ How often should I get tested?
- ✓ How can STIs affect a baby if I get pregnant?
- ✓ How do you test for a STI, yeast infection, or bacterial vaginosis?

## PREVENTION

(Protect yourself.)

## DETECTION

(Get tested.)

## TREATMENT

(Follow your provider's advice.)

If you have a STI, tell your partners so they get treated, too! The only way to stop it from spreading is to make sure everyone who has it gets treated. Since you can have a STI and not know it, you can't be sure whether you got the infection from your present partner or an earlier one. Damage can be done to the body if the STI is not treated so get tested!

# SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)



## How do you know if you have a STI?



Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center  
400-428 Columbus Ave., New Haven, CT 06519  
(203) 503-3000 • [www.HillHealthCenter.com](http://www.HillHealthCenter.com)

## What are STIs?

- STIs are infections that are spread through sexual contact (vaginal, oral, or anal sex).
- Some STIs such as HIV and Hepatitis B and C can spread by contact with infected blood.

## What are some symptoms of STIs?

### Women

- Sores, bumps, or blisters near your genitals, anus, or mouth
- Burning or pain when you urinate (pee)
- Itching, a bad smell, or unusual discharge from your vagina or anus
- Pain in your lower belly (abdomen)
- Bleeding from your vagina when you don't have your period

### Men

- Sores, bumps, or blisters near your genitals, anus, or mouth
- Burning or pain when you urinate (pee)
- Drip or discharge from your penis
- Itching, pain, or discharge from your anus

## Do STIs always have symptoms?

- Many people who have a STI do not have any symptoms. A test is the only way to be sure.
- If you do have symptoms, they may appear right away, or they might not show up for weeks or months.
- They might come and go. Even if the symptoms go away, you may still have the infection.

**Early testing can prevent damage to your body.**

## What are the risks of STIs?

- STIs in pregnant women can cause problems with pregnancy and lead to serious, sometimes deadly, infections in the baby.
- Some STIs can damage the body so much that a woman cannot have a baby.
- HPV is a STI that can lead to cervical cancer in women.
- Some STIs, such as Herpes and HIV, do not go away.

## How can I prevent STIs?

- The surest ways to prevent STIs are:
  - Not have sex
  - Have sex with someone who does not have a STI **and** only has sex with you



- Condoms can lessen the risk of getting a STI if used correctly **every time** you have sex (vaginal, anal, or oral sex).
- Talk with your partner and agree to use condoms.
- Both men and women should carry condoms. Be prepared.
- Only use K-Y Jelly® or Astroglide® with condoms. Other products that are not made from water can make the condom weak and cause small holes.
- Washing your genitals, urinating, or douching after sex will not prevent any STI.