



## STI TESTS

### Tests for Sexually Transmitted Infections

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infections you can get when having unprotected sex or skin on skin contact with someone. STIs are serious and may not go away by themselves. It is important to be tested and treated if necessary. Some STIs have no symptoms and you may not know that you have an STI.

### Why would I be tested?

You may wish to have tests because:

- You and a new partner want to be tested before beginning a sexual relationship.
- You or your partner have had unprotected sex.
- You think you have a sexually transmitted infection (STI).
- You want a routine sexual health check.

If you want a test or if you are worried, talk to your doctor, Sexual Health Service or Family Planning Association staff. They provide the tests and treatment.

If you have an infection, your partner will also need to be tested and treated.

**The only way to know for sure you have an STI is to get tested.**

### What do I need to know about STI tests?

You can find out anything that you want to know by talking in confidence to the doctor or nurse who will be taking the test.

You can discuss:

- The STIs you think you may have.
- Confidentiality – your tests can be coded so that your name is not used.
- The different test you may need.
- What to do if a test shows that you have an STI.
- When and how you will find out about the test results.
- How to practise safer sex in the future.
- If there are any costs involved.
- Whether or not you need a test.

The discussion will help you to make an informed decision before you give your consent to have a test.

### STI tests are:

- Confidential.
- The only way to be sure you don't have an STI.
- Available from:
  - Sexual Health Services.
  - Family Planning Centres.
  - Your local GP, Doctor or Student Health Service.

## Tests for:

| <b>Sexually Transmitted Infections</b>   | <b>Visual</b> | <b>Blood</b> | <b>Swab</b> | <b>Urine</b> | <b>Internal</b> |
|--|---------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Chlamydia:<br>Bacterial infection that can cause pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility   |               |              | Yes         | Yes          | Yes             |
| Genital Herpes:<br>Viral infection on the mouth and lips, penis, and in and around the vagina and anus                                 | Yes           |              | Yes         |              |                 |
| Genital Warts:<br>The human papilloma virus causes wart-like lumps in and around the vagina or penis and around the anus               | Yes           |              |             |              |                 |
| Gonorrhoea:<br>Bacterial infection of the genital area, rectum and throat that can cause   | Yes           |              | Yes         |              | Yes             |
| Syphilis:<br>Bacterial infection of the skin and genital area. Late stages can cause damage to the heart and brain                     | Yes           | Yes          | Yes         |              |                 |
| Non specific urethritis:<br>Infection of the urethra (the tube which carries urine from the body) can be caused by a virus or bacteria | Yes           |              | Yes         | Yes          |                 |
| Trichomonas vaginalis:<br>Organism that infects the vagina causing a discharge   | Yes           |              | Yes         |              | Yes             |

Your doctor may give you an internal examination if any of these STIs are suspected.

To be sure you don't have an STI get tested at an FPA Centre, Sexual Health Service, or by your doctor.

Condoms will help to protect you and your partner(s) from STIs when you have sex.

## Tests for:

| <b>Infections transmitted sexually and in other ways:</b>  | <b>Visual</b> | <b>Blood</b> | <b>Swab</b> | <b>Urine</b> | <b>Internal</b> |
|--|---------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Hepatitis A:<br>A viral infection that attacks and damages the liver   |               | Yes          |             |              |                 |
| Hepatitis B:<br>A blood borne and sexually transmitted viral infection that attacks and damages the liver  |               | Yes          |             |              |                 |
| Hepatitis C:<br>A blood borne viral infection which attacks and damages the liver  |               | Yes          |             |              |                 |
| HIV:<br>A blood borne and sexually transmitted viral infection which attacks the immune system making it difficult for the body to fight infection/infertility |               | Yes          |             |              |                 |
| Public Lice or Crabs:<br>Small lice which live in the pubic hair cause itching and inflammation  | Yes           |              |             |              |                 |
| <b>Infections that affect the genitals, but may not be sexually transmitted:</b>   | <b>Visual</b> | <b>Blood</b> | <b>Swab</b> | <b>Urine</b> | <b>Internal</b> |
| Thrush or Candidiasis:<br>A yeast organism more commonly infecting the vagina causing itching and discharge  | Yes           |              | Yes         |              | Yes             |
| Cystitis:<br>Bacterial infection of the bladder lining. It hurts when passing urine. There may be backache and stomach pain                                    |               |              |             | Yes          |                 |
| Bacterial Vaginosis:<br>This infection can be the result of an imbalance of normal bacteria in a healthy vagina. It may cause a discharge                      | Yes           |              | Yes         |              | Yes             |

### Visual examination

After an examination the doctor/nurse may be able to see infection that is present, decide what other tests maybe necessary and possibly treat you.

### Blood test

Blood will be taken from your arm. The blood will then be sent to a laboratory for testing to see if you have a sexually transmitted infection. You will be given the results of your test in person and face to face.

### Swab test

This will be taken gently pressing a swab against any sores, ulcers or discharge. The specimen will be sent to a laboratory for testing. You will then be given the results of your test and be treated if necessary.

### Urine test

The doctor/nurse will ask for a sample of urine that will be sent to a laboratory for testing. You will be given the results of your test and treated if necessary.

### Internal examination

A doctor/nurse may want to look inside your vagina and may want to take a swab if it seems that there is an infection. The swab if it seems that there is an infection. The swab will be sent to a laboratory to be tested. You will be given the results of your test and treated if necessary.