

Older Adults and STIs



STIs are sexually transmitted infections. They used to be called VD (venereal disease). They can be passed from one person to another during sex. Anyone who is having sex can get an STIs.

If both you and your partner have only had sex together for many years, you are not likely to be at risk. But if you have sex with more than one person, or recently had a new sex partner, this sheet is for you.

Age is no protection: STIs may seem like a young person's problem. Not true! Anyone who has sex can catch an STI. Even you!

What puts you at risk?

Most STIs are passed through contact with some body fluids, genital sores, or blood. You're at risk if you:

- Have ever had sex with even one person who has an STI
- Have multiple sex partners
- Have had sex with a new or casual partner without using a condom

Are there any other risks?

HIV and hepatitis can be passed in other ways besides sex. These include:

- Taking street drugs using a needle that someone else has used
- Having had a blood transfusion before 1985, or in a country where blood isn't tested for viruses

Get tested

If you think you're at risk for an STI, get tested. The sooner you know about an STI, the sooner it can be treated. If you take medicine early, the STI is less likely to cause you harm.

Getting test results

For some STIs, results are ready right away. For others, results can take up to 1 week. If you do have an STI, your doctor can help you tell your partners so they can get tested and treated too.

How to protect yourself

If you have sex, there are 3 simple rules for protecting yourself:

- Limit the number of sex partners you have
- Use a condom each time you have sex
- Talk to your partners about STIs



Adapted from KRAMES