



STI Tests/Diseases

The three most common STIs that we see are **HPV (genital warts), HSV (herpes) and Chlamydia**. It is estimated that 10 – 30% of university students will contract one or more of these infections during their college years.

Chlamydia:

Men and women can have this infection for an extended period of time without symptoms, which is one reason it is transmitted frequently from one person to another – individuals often do not know that they have it unless they have been tested. All sexually active people should be screened for this infection with each new partner. (We can test for this infection with a urine test that costs about \$25) This infection can be cured with antibiotics.

HPV (genital warts):

This is a very common infection. Women can be screened for this infection with annual exams and pap smears. The only way to screen for this infection in men is with a visual inspection looking for the characteristic warts or bumps caused by the virus. There is no cure for this infection, but there is treatment for the warts if they appear.

HSV (herpes):

There is a blood test (about \$65) to screen for antibodies to this virus but it can not predict when or if you will develop symptoms or when you are contagious to other people. The ideal way to diagnose this infection is to be seen immediately if you develop any rash in the genital area – especially if the rash is painful and/or has ulcers or small blisters or pimples. The fluid in the blisters can be tested for the herpes virus. There is no cure for this infection, but there is effective suppressive medication to control it.

GC (gonorrhea):

This infection is not common in the university population, but is occasionally seen. (A test for this infection can be added to the urine Chlamydia test for \$11.) This infection can be cured with antibiotics.

RPR (syphilis):

This infection is very uncommon in the university population. There are 5 – 10 cases reported in the state of Oregon each year. These primarily occur in high risk groups (people with HIV, men who have sex with men, IV drug users, sex workers, sexual contact with high risk groups) (There is a blood test for this infection that cost \$15.) This infection can be treated with antibiotics.

HIV (AIDS virus):

This is obviously a serious infection, but fortunately it is uncommon on campus. The preferred test for HIV is a blood test that is sent to the State lab. It takes two weeks for results to come back and costs \$12. There is no cure for HIV. The best defense is to avoid high risk behavior and high risk partners and to **ALWAYS** use condoms.

Hepatitis:

We normally do not screen for hepatitis unless a person is symptomatic or at significant risk for exposure. There is a vaccine for Hepatitis B. If you have not received this vaccine series, you should strongly consider getting immunized. You can get the vaccine through Area C in the Health Center.

Information Regarding STI Screening

There is not a single test to check for all STIs. For some infections, we have fairly reliable screening tests, and for others we do not have any screening test that can detect the infection in someone who has no symptoms. The choice of which infections to screen for depends on the individual's history of risk factors, potential or known exposure, and what they are willing to pay for.

Individuals who have low risk sexual behavior should have a test for Chlamydia whenever they have a new partner.

Individuals with more high risk behavior/history or high risk partners should consider other testing. Below is a list of high risk criteria in order of risk from top to bottom. If you have any of these risk factors, you should discuss additional tests with your health care provider:

- Individuals with HIV
- Men who have sex with men
- People who use IV drugs or abuse other drugs
- Individuals who have/had sex with strangers, sex workers, IV drug user, bisexual
- Have/had a partner with any of the above risks
- Had an STD in the past year (especially herpes)
- Had a new partner in the past two months
- Had two or more partners in the past year
- Use non-condom contraception plus any of the above

Below is a summary of tests for the infections discussed in this handout:

Chlamydia: Fairly common infection, often asymptomatic, urine test – *Recommended* for all sexually active individuals with new partner.

GC (gonorrhea): Fairly uncommon, urine test – *Consider* if have more than minimal risk.

RPR (syphilis): Very uncommon, blood test – *Consider* if have more than minimal risk.

HIV (AIDS virus): Uncommon on campus, blood test – *Consider* if more than minimal risk.

Herpes: *Recommend prompt evaluation if you develop rash in the genital area* – test can be done on fluid from blisters. Blood test for antibodies not routinely recommended but consider if at risk for exposure.

HPV: Women can be screened with annual pap smear. *No screening test for men*, but should be examined for any abnormalities of the skin in the genital/anal area.

Hepatitis: Usually only screen for this if symptomatic or at risk of exposure.