



These questions are designed to make sure you are okay, and it's important that you answer honestly. Professionals have a duty of care to young people and if you answer these questions truthfully, they can make sure that you are safe and healthy.

Medical professionals cannot break your confidentiality to tell your parents anything about your visit. However, if they feel that you or someone else is at risk of harm, they may need to share information about you with another professional to keep you safe. They should always tell you if they need to do this.

You don't have to be 16 to get tested for STIs. However, if you are under 16, the professional that you speak to (ie. the nurse, doctor or pharmacist) will have child protection guidelines they have to follow to make sure you are safe. They will ask you questions about your life, your relationships and sometimes about the types of sex you are having, as well as asking you about any health problems you might have and whether you drink any alcohol/use drugs.



The only way to protect yourself from STIs is to always use condoms during sexual contact.

You can usually have an STI test that checks for Chlamydia & Gonorrhoea around 2 weeks after having unprotected sex. This gives the infection time to show up on a test.

Testing for Chlamydia & Gonorrhoea is quick, easy and not painful at all. You will either be asked to gently swab the inside of your vagina, anus or mouth or to pee in a test pot – that is it!

Testing for blood borne viruses such as HIV & Hepatitis does vary, but can be accurate from approx. 4 weeks after having unprotected sex, and often consists of a small sample of blood being taken from your arm/finger.

STI stands for sexually transmitted infection. They are usually transmitted through sex (oral, vaginal and anal sex) or genital to genital contact, but can also be transmitted in other ways such as sharing intravenous drug equipment (ie. needles), through childbirth and by sharing sex toys.

Remember...

Condoms are the only type of contraception that protect you from STIs.

Visit www.wavehighland.com for more information about safe sex and where to get help from in Highland



Wave provides free information about sex and relationships to under 25s

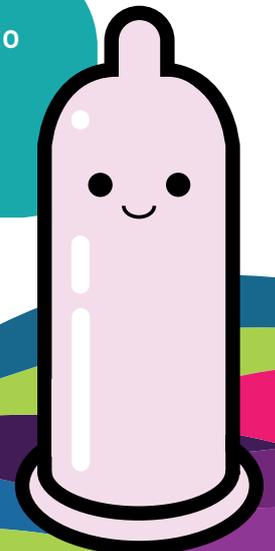
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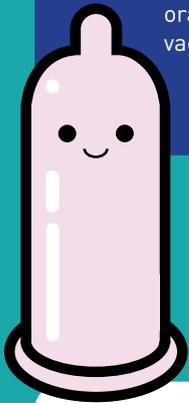
Wee Johnny's guide to
STIs



Did you know?

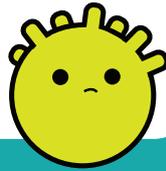
Many STIs don't show any symptoms, so you may not know you have one.

A sign that you might have an STI is if you have had unprotected sex. This includes oral, anal and vaginal sex.



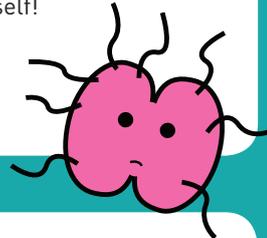
Chlamydia

Chlamydia is the most common STI in the UK. It often has no signs or symptoms, but can cause unusual discharge, pain when peeing/having sex, irregular periods and lower abdominal pain. It is treated with antibiotics but, if left untreated, can affect your ability to have children. Testing involves peeing into a pot or gently swabbing inside the vagina, anus or mouth, which you can usually do yourself!



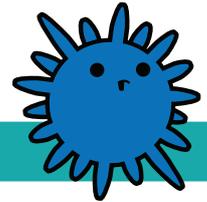
Gonorrhoea

Gonorrhoea is a bacterial infection like Chlamydia and can also affect your ability to have children. Like Chlamydia, it often has no signs or symptoms but can cause yellow/green discharge, a burning feeling when peeing and pain or tenderness in the lower abdomen. It is treated with antibiotics and testing involves peeing into a pot or gently swabbing inside the vagina, anus or mouth, which you can usually do yourself!



HIV

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. The virus can be transmitted through blood, semen and vaginal fluids and is not curable. However, treatment means that the virus can be kept at a low level within the body so that people can still live long, healthy lives. Testing usually involves a nurse/doctor taking a small sample of blood. AIDS is the final stages of the HIV infection, when the body can no longer fight off life threatening infections.



Pubic lice

Pubic lice are very small, parasitic insects which live on the pubic hair. Pubic lice can be sexually transmitted, but are also passed on through close body contact, sharing towels, bed linen and clothing. Sometimes known as 'crabs', you may be able to see black powder (droppings), brown eggs or the yellow-grey or red lice. While these lice can cause itchiness and irritation down below, they are harmless and easy to get rid of with lotions/medicated shampoos.



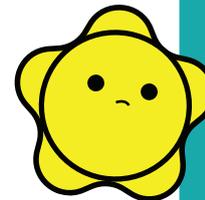
Genital Warts

Genital Warts are small growths or bumps that appear on or around the genital or anal area. They are the second most common type of STI in under 25s in the UK. Caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV), the warts themselves can be treated but the HPV virus can't be cured. Genital warts are spread by skin-to-skin contact and not everyone that contracts the virus will develop warts.



Herpes

Herpes causes blisters to appear around the genitals but can also infect the anal area. It is highly contagious and although the symptoms can be treated, the virus cannot be cured. Testing usually involve taking a swab of fluid from a blister and the virus is treated with antiviral medicines.



Syphilis

Syphilis has been around since medieval times and, although less common than other STIs, new cases are on the increase. If caught early, it can be treated with antibiotics but if left untreated, can cause serious illness. Testing usually involves a small sample of blood being taken.



Remember...

The earlier an STI is detected and treated, the less impact it will have on your body. Getting an STI test is quick, easy and painless. Testing will usually involve either a gentle swab sample that you can take yourself, peeing into a sample pot or giving a small blood sample - although sometimes it may also include a quick examination by a nurse or doctor. Either way, it doesn't take long and saves you a lot of worry!

