

Grades 7 & Up

Durham Region Public Health Human Development and Sexual Health Curriculum Support Document

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Suggested Materials:

- pens
- paper
- condom
- Condom Cards (see Appendix)
- STI Fact Sheets
(<https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/sexually-transmitted-infections--stis-.aspx>)
- condom demonstrator or banana (optional)

Discuss Group Agreements

Work with students to construct a list of group agreements that will increase their feelings of safety and comfort during sexual health classes.

It is essential that the following be included:

- No personal questions or sharing of private information.*
- You have the right to pass on a question.
- Emphasize respect.

Post the list in the classroom and refer to it as needed.

**There is a balance between encouraging students to talk about real life and over disclosure of private information. Encourage students to use the phrase "Someone I know..." instead of the person's name if sharing information of a personal nature.*

Activity 1: Introduction to STIs

Teacher prompt:

- “What do the letters STI stand for?” (Sexually Transmitted Infections)

Some students may be aware of the term **STDs**. Explain that not all infections become diseases, so the current term is STIs.

It is common to refer to STIs now as **STBBIs**: Sexually Transmitted Blood Borne Illnesses.

Define the following words: bacteria, cure, virus, treatment (see below for definitions).

Bacteria

- single celled organism
- can cause common infections like strep throat or an ear infection
- can be **cured** (eliminated) with antibiotics
- can return as a new infection if body is re-exposed to the bacteria; can be retreated

Virus

- an organism capable of reproducing itself (multiplying) inside the body’s cells
- very difficult to cure because to kill the virus requires medications that can also damage cells
- can cause common infections like colds, flu and chicken pox
- symptoms can be **treated** (i.e., cold medicines, cough syrups, some anti-viral medications) – but most viruses cannot be cured (eliminated) o Note: an exception is Hepatitis C which can be cured with medications in some people who carry in the infection
- the immune system helps fight the infection and may help the body to develop immunity so that body will not get the same virus again
- some viruses have the ability to stay quietly in the bodies but can present themselves with symptoms later on (e.g., cold sores)

Parasites

- a living organism that survives by living off another living thing’s body
- can be cured with medications (i.e., oral medication, cream, shampoo)
- can return as a new infection if body is re-exposed; can be retreated

Activity 2: Identify Common STIs and Genital Infections

Draw headings on the board: Bacterial, Viral, Parasite, and Other Genital Infections.

Option A) Ask students to name all the STIs they have heard of. For each infection named, ask if they know which heading it should be put under. Write the infection under the correct heading as seen below.

Option B) Print off cards with the STIs named in the chart below. Ask students to work in pairs or groups of three. Give each group one STI card and ask them to try to put it under the correct heading.

**Note: this activity is about identifying and categorizing infections; further information about infections will follow in Activity 3.*

BACTERIA	VIRUS	PARASITE	OTHER GENITAL INFECTIONS
Chlamydia	Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)	Pubic Lice (Crabs)	Bacterial Vaginosis (BV)
Gonorrhea	Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)	Trichomoniasis	Yeast
Syphilis	Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV)		
	Hepatitis B, C		

**Note: Periodically students identify AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) as an infection to be included here, but this is an acquired illness after a body has been infected with HIV. See STI fact sheets for further information: <https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/sexually-transmitted-infections--stis-.aspx>*

Additional Information for Activity #2

- Some common STIs (chlamydia, gonorrhea, HPV) do not always show symptoms (e.g., unusual discharge, odour, itching, warts or sores, pain during sex)
- Even though HPV (Human Papillomavirus) and Hepatitis B are both viral infections, the body can clear them on its own with a strong immune system.
- With HSV (Herpes Simplex Virus), a person can get it even when their partner shows no symptoms. Treatment can decrease the severity of symptoms.
- Pubic lice/crabs are an infestation easily treated with the use of medicated shampoo.
- A yeast infection is not an STI. Yeast is a fungus that normally lives on and in everyone's body; when there is an overgrowth of this fungus, it can cause itching and/or abnormal discharge. It is recommended to not self-treat but to have it diagnosed and treated by a health care provider.
- Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) is not an STI. BV is caused by an imbalance of the bacteria that normally live inside the vagina. This imbalance can cause an abnormal discharge with odour. It is recommended to not self-treat but to have it diagnosed and treated by a health care provider.
- Any genital discomfort or symptoms should get checked at a sexual health clinic doctor's office.
- Sexual health clinics are confidential and do not require a health card. Treatment is free.
- Screening for some infections may be as easy as giving a urine sample.

- Students can call the Durham Sexual Health Clinic (905-433-8901 for Oshawa and 905-420-8781 for Pickering) for information and clinic hours.
- Another resource for information is the Sexual Health InfoLine of Ontario (SHILO) at 416-392-2437, eChat is also available.

Activity 3: Identify Common STIs and Genital Infections

Assign students into 11 pairs/groups – one pair/group for each of the 11 infections listed in the chart below.

Instruct each pair/group to use the STI Fact Sheets to learn important points to teach the rest of the class about their assigned infection (transmission, symptoms, testing, treatment, etc.).

Fact sheets can be found here:

<https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/sexually-transmitted-infections--stis-.aspx>

Ask each pair/group to present their findings to the class in a creative way (e.g., comic strip, poem, acting, etc.).

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	Hepatitis B, C		

Activity 4: Methods of Prevention

Teacher prompt:

- “How could someone protect themselves against STIs?”

Possible Answers:

- Communication. By discussing sexual history with partner(s), you can make informed decisions together about safer sex.
- Postpone higher risk activities like oral, vaginal, and anal sex, and skin-to-skin contact in the genital area including inner thighs and buttocks.

- Both partners can be tested for STIs before engaging in any sexual activity. Getting tested beforehand will allow a person with an STI to be treated before passing it on to their partner.
- Some STIs are preventable through vaccination. Vaccines are offered to students for hepatitis B and up to 9 strains of HPV.
- For both vaginal and anal intercourse, condoms are an effective way of reducing the risk of many STIs, including chlamydia, gonorrhea, and HIV. Condoms can also reduce the risk of transmitting STIs that are passed through skin-to-skin contact (e.g., HPV, HSV) but only for the skin that is covered by the condom.
- Many STIs can be transmitted through oral sex, including HSV (herpes), HPV, chlamydia, syphilis, and gonorrhea. For oral sex on a penis, condoms can help reduce the risk of transmission. For oral sex on a vulva or anus, dental dams (a sheet of latex) can help reduce the risk of transmission and can be found online, in some sex shops, or can be made out of an external condom or latex glove. (Note that oral sex poses a low risk for HIV transmission).

Activity 5: Using Condoms

Show students both an external condom (commonly known as ‘male condom’) and internal/insertive condom (commonly known as ‘female condom’) both in their packages and without. Explain that you will be focusing on external condoms in this class. This is because internal/insertive condoms are more difficult to access, more expensive, and not as commonly used.

Mix up Condom Cards (see Appendix) and offer them to volunteers (1 card for each volunteer).

Give volunteers 1 – 2 minutes to put Condom Cards in the correct order of steps.

Once steps are correctly in order, go through each step one by one, providing an explanation and demonstration (putting condom on wooden demonstrator, banana, or fingers).

How to Use an External Condom

WILD CARD: Consent

- Ensure everyone involved willingly consent to all activities involved.
- This card can be placed anywhere along the 10 steps. You may even want to print out multiple consent cards to show that consent is ongoing and that checking-in with your partner is important before, during, and after sexual activity.

1. Check expiry date.

- Expired condoms are more likely to break.
- Written in small print and may be hard to read or find on package.

2. Check for air bubble.

- Check that the package feels puffy, like a bag of chips.
- If there is no air bubble, the condom may be punctured or the package torn. Throw it out and use a new one.

3. Open the package carefully.

- Use ridged side or ripping tab on package to open.
- Be careful that fingernails do not rip the condom.

4. Check the rolling direction of the condom.

- Ensure the condom is not inside out, as condoms are made to unroll one way only. The condom should unroll easily down the penis.
- Check the roll direction before putting the condom on the penis. If the condom is placed on the penis and then you find that it is inside out, do not flip it over to unroll and use. Instead, throw the condom out and start again, as pre-ejaculate fluids may have transferred from the penis to the condom.

5. Pinch the tip of the condom

- This is done to reduce the chances of breaking the condom by:
 - allowing space to catch the semen after ejaculation
 - ensuring that there is no air bubble at the tip of the condom

6. Unroll condom all the way down erect penis

- While still pinching the tip, unroll the condom down the penis shaft as far as it will go, maximizing coverage of the skin.

7. Intercourse/Ejaculation/Orgasm (with lube)

- Adding lubricant to the inside tip and/or to the outside of the condom can increase sensation for both partners and reduce friction. Less friction means that the condom is less likely to break.
- Be sure to use a water-based lubricant or silicone-based lubricant (not oil, as oil breaks down latex).
- Note that intercourse does not always end in ejaculation and/or orgasm and it can still be enjoyable without.

8. Hold base of condom and pull out

- Hold the condom at the base of penis and pull out of partner's body before the penis loses the erection.
- When the penis is no longer erect, the condom does not fit as tightly and can slip off. Holding the base of the condom ensures that the condom stays on the penis when pulling out.

9. Remove the condom from penis

- Remove the condom away from partner to avoid spilling fluids on their body.

10. Throw condom in garbage

- Tie a knot at the end of the condom to contain the semen. • Do not flush condoms down the toilet.

Additional Information for Activity 5:

- Many STIs can be prevented by using condoms during vaginal, anal, or oral sex.
- Condoms prevent the exchange of body fluids from one person to another, and can help prevent both STIs and pregnancy.
- No method works 100% of the time and many young people choose to wait to have sex for this reason.
- Condoms provide a barrier during skin-to-skin contact, but only for the parts that are covered or in contact with the condom.
- Young people who decide that they are ready for sexual intercourse need to be able to talk about consent and the use of condoms with their partner(s) every time.
- All people must be aware that sex should only be done with someone who wants to do it (i.e., someone who gives consent).
- Consent is needed for any sexual activity and people can change their minds at any time. Sex without consent is sexual assault and is against the law.
- It is the responsibility of each person who is engaging in any sexual activity to check in with their partner(s) to ensure that consent is ongoing.
- People who consume alcohol or drugs may become incapable of giving consent. People who are intoxicated cannot legally give consent. Unconscious people cannot give consent.
- Alcohol and other drugs may interfere with using a condom properly.

Activity 6: Where to Get Help

Teacher prompt:

- “What advice would you give to someone if they thought they had an STI?”

Possible Answers:

- Go to a doctor
- Go to a sexual health clinic
- Speak to a trusted adult

Remind students of the following resources

- Students can call the Durham Sexual Health Clinic (905-433-8901 for Oshawa and 905-420-8781 for Pickering) for information, appointments, and clinic hours.
- Another resource for information is the Sexual Health InfoLine of Ontario (SHILO) at 416-392-2437, eChat is also available.
- Kids Help Phone (1-800-668-6868)
- Teen Health Source (www.teenhealthsource.com)

Activity 7: Review

Choose one of the following 3 activities to review material:

Option 1: STI Quiz

See Appendix for handouts, answers, and discussion guide

Answer True or False

1. STIs are very common.
2. There is a high risk for passing an STI when touching someone's genitals with your hands.
3. A person can have an STI and not know it.
4. There is treatment for all STIs.
5. It is important to get treated for STIs because some can cause serious health problems including infertility.
6. Vaccines prevent some STIs.
7. There is a cure for HIV.
8. If you have ever had unprotected sexual activity you should get tested for STIs.
9. There are ways to reduce the risk of getting an STI.
10. Females under 18 are at higher risk for getting STIs than women over 18 because of their developing reproductive systems.

Option 2: STI Trivia

See answer key in Appendix.

1. HIV is tested through what bodily fluid?
2. How are HSV (herpes) and HPV passed?
3. The only way to know if you have an STI is to ____?
4. What vaccine protects against many strains of HPV?
5. If chlamydia is left untreated, it can lead to what?
6. If needles are shared, there is an increased risk of transmitting what type of STI?
7. In Ontario, the HPV vaccine is offered to all students in what grade?
8. True or False: Someone will know that they have an STI because their body will show symptoms.
9. What type of drugs are used to cure bacterial STIs?
10. What is an STI that has no cure?
11. What is the best way to prevent STI?
12. How many weeks after sex (or the incident with risk) is an HIV test considered accurate?
13. What is the only form of birth control that also helps to reduce the risk of STI transmission?
14. Name a pelvic exam that screens for signs of cervical cancer.
15. Different types of cancer, including cervical, anal, penile, and some mouth and throat cancers can be caused by an infection with which STI?

16. True or False: Most people who are sexually active will get one or more types of STIs.
17. To ensure that there is space for ejaculated semen to go, be sure to do this to the tip of the condom when unrolling it down the penis.
18. What is the most common bacterial STI?
19. What kind of lube should be used with condoms?
20. For any type of sexual activity, there must always be ongoing _____ from both partners.
21. Where can youth go for STI testing and free condoms?
22. What should be checked on a condom before using it?
23. What kind of lube should not be used with condoms?
24. This type of STI is treated using a special medicated shampoo.

Option 3: STI BINGO

- Give each student a blank bingo sheet (see Appendix) and ask them to take a few minutes to fill out their BINGO boards by putting each point from the Word Bank into any box they would like.
- Read trivia questions (see Option 2 – above) and ask students to volunteer responses. With each question, announce the correct answer. That answer becomes the BINGO ‘number’ that students should cross off on their own board.
- The first participant to get 5 boxes in a row on their board wins. Rows can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal.

Conclusion

- Summarize what was discussed in this session and ask for any questions.
- Encourage students to share what they have learned with a trusted adult.
- Write the Kids Help Phone contact information on the board (1-800-668-6868, www.kidshelpphone.ca) and remind students that contacting Kids Help Phone is free, confidential, anonymous, and that it can be a safe place to discuss concerns.

Adapted with permission from Toronto Public Health (October 2022)



HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

Durham Health Connection Line | 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729
durham.ca/sexualhealth

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

