

Syphilis *sounds like 'sif-a-lis'*

Queensland has seen a rise in syphilis with North Queensland experiencing a syphilis outbreak since 2011. The outbreak has spread to the NT, WA, SA, the Torres Strait and Central Queensland. Syphilis is caused by the *Treponema pallidum* bacteria. Syphilis can increase your risk of catching HIV.

You can get syphilis by:

- Having unprotected sex with a person who has syphilis.
- Skin-to-skin contact with a syphilis sore, ulcer or lump called a 'chancre'. A chancre ('shan-kar') is where the bacteria entered the body.

Often people don't realise they have a chancre because they can be painless and you might not be able to see it. Most of the time your partner/s has got no symptoms. Your partner/s may not even know they are sick.

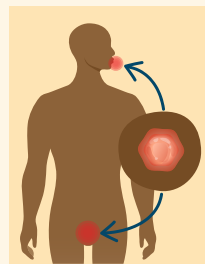
You can't get syphilis by:

- Sitting on toilet seat.
- Someone sneezing/coughing near you.
- Sharing food, cups or cutlery or things like shaking hands.

You can prevent getting syphilis by:

- Using condoms with a water-based lube (lube prevents condom breaking).
- Avoiding contact with syphilis sores.

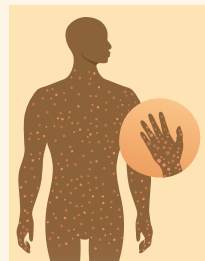
Syphilis develops in three stages:



1 Chancre/ sores

Primary syphilis

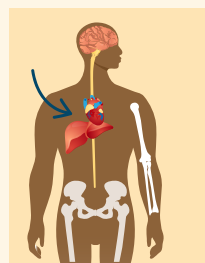
Small sores, ulcers or lumps show up in the genital area or on fingers or mouth.



2 Body rash

Secondary syphilis

Sores, ulcers or lumps may go, and then a rash may appear (mostly on hands, feet and back).



3 Internal organs

Tertiary syphilis

Syphilis can show up years later with damage to the brain and/or heart.

Testing:

- A blood test and swab of chancre/sore will show if you have syphilis.
- Point-of-Care testing if available.

Treatment:

- Syphilis is treated with antibiotic injection (most commonly penicillin).
- No sex for 7 days whilst you are on treatment, as it might take a while for the medicine to work.

Follow up testing:

After you have completed your treatment, you need to come back to clinic to make sure the infection has cleared and you haven't been re-infected.

Consequences if not treated

If you don't get treatment for syphilis it can cause:

- Permanent damage to your heart.
- Permanent damage to your brain.
- Not being able to have babies.

If you have syphilis, you can give it to a pregnant mum and make her and her unborn baby sick.

Syphilis and pregnancy

Untreated syphilis can lead to not being able to have babies.



- Congenital syphilis is when syphilis is passed from pregnant mum to the unborn baby.
- Syphilis in pregnancy can make your unborn baby sick.
- If babies are born with syphilis they may end up with brain and nerve problems like blindness, deafness and seizures, deformed bones or they can die.

Not judging you or your partner, need to be safe for baby.

Contact tracing

Your partner/s who you had sex with up to 12 months (depending on syphilis staging) need to know so that they can get tested and treated to be safe. Often you won't see the chancre, so you might not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s. It's confidential.

Better to still get checked.

Chlamydia *sounds like 'cla-mid-dee-ah'*

Chlamydia is so common that it's the most frequently reported STI in Australia. Chlamydia is caused by the Chlamydia trachomatis bacteria. Having chlamydia can increase your risk of catching HIV.

You can get chlamydia by:

- Having unprotected sex with a person who has chlamydia. Most of the time your partner/s has got no symptoms. Your partner/s may not even know they are sick.

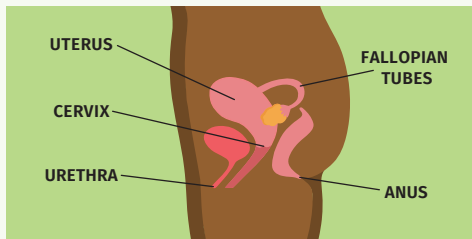
You can't get chlamydia by:

- Sitting on toilet seats.
- Someone sneezing or coughing near you.
- Sharing food, cups or cutlery.
- Things like shaking hands.

You can prevent getting chlamydia by:

- Always using condoms with a water-based lube (lube prevents condom breaking).

Chlamydia can infect a woman's:



- Uterus.
- Fallopian tubes.
- Cervix.
- Anus.
- Urethra.
- Throat.

Chlamydia can look like:

- Change in vaginal discharge to white, yellow or grey watery discharge that may smell 'fishy'.
- Burning feeling when urinating.
- Lower belly pain.
- Pain during sex.
- Bleeding or spotting between periods.
- Bleeding after sex.

Chlamydia often has no symptoms, so you may not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s.

Testing:

- A urine test and/or swab for discharge will show if you have chlamydia.
- Point-of-Care testing if available.

Treatment:

- Chlamydia is treated with an antibiotic tablet.
- No sex for 7 days whilst you are on treatment, as it might take a while for the medicine to work.

Follow up testing:

After you have completed your treatment, you need to come back to clinic to make sure the infection has cleared and you haven't been re-infected.

Consequences if not treated

If you don't get treatment for chlamydia it can cause:

- Chronic pelvic pain or infection.
- Swelling and pain in joints.
- Not being able to have babies.

Chlamydia and pregnancy

Untreated chlamydia can lead to not being able to have babies.



- If you have chlamydia and you are pregnant you can make your unborn baby sick through premature delivery and low birth weight for baby.
- All pregnant women should get tested for chlamydia at their first visit and then throughout their pregnancy.

Not judging you or your partner, need to be safe for baby.

Contact tracing

Your partner/s who you had sex with during the last 6 months need to know so that they can get tested and treated to be safe.

Often you won't see the symptoms of chlamydia, so you might not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s. It's confidential.

Better to still get checked.

Gonorrhoea *sounds like 'gono-rear'*

Sometimes known as 'the clap' or 'gono'. Gonorrhoea is caused by the *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* bacteria. Having gonorrhoea can increase your risk of catching HIV.

You can get gonorrhoea by:

- Having unprotected sex with a person who has gonorrhoea. Most of the time your partner/s has got no symptoms. Your partner/s may not even know they are sick.

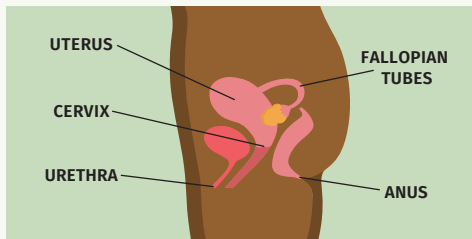
You can't get gonorrhoea by:

- Sitting on toilet seats.
- Someone sneezing or coughing near you.
- Sharing food, cups or cutlery.
- Things like shaking hands.

You can prevent getting gonorrhoea by:

- Always using condoms with a water-based lube (lube prevents condom breaking).

Gonorrhoea can infect a woman's:



- Uterus.
- Fallopian tubes.
- Cervix.
- Anus.
- Urethra.
- Throat.

Gonorrhoea can look like:

- Change in vaginal discharge and may be green/yellow and thin, watery discharge.
- Burning feeling when urinating.
- Lower belly pain.
- Pain during sex.
- Bleeding or spotting between periods.
- Bleeding after sex.

Gonorrhoea often has no symptoms, so you may not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s.

Testing:

- A urine test and/or swab for discharge will show if you have gonorrhoea.
- Point-of-Care testing if available.

Treatment:

- Gonorrhoea is treated with antibiotic tablet and injection.
- No sex for 7 days whilst you are on treatment, as it might take a while for the medicine to work.

Follow up testing:

After you have completed your treatment, you need to come back to clinic to make sure the infection has cleared and you haven't been re-infected.

Consequences if not treated

If you don't get treatment for gonorrhoea it can cause:

- Chronic pelvic pain or infection.
- Not being able to have babies.

Gonorrhoea and pregnancy

Untreated gonorrhoea can lead to not being able to have babies.



- If you have gonorrhoea and you are pregnant you can make your unborn baby sick through premature delivery and low birth weight for baby.
- All pregnant women should get tested for gonorrhoea at their first visit and then throughout their pregnancy.

Not judging you or your partner, need to be safe for baby.

Contact tracing

Your partner/s who you had sex with during the last 2 months minimum need to know so that they can get tested and treated to be safe.

Often you won't see the symptoms of gonorrhoea, so you may not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s. It's confidential.

Better to still get checked.

Trichomonas *sounds like 'try-car-moe-nus'*

Also known as trichomoniasis, sometimes called 'trike'. Trichomonas is the most common curable STI globally. Trichomonas is caused by the Trichomonas vaginalis parasite. Having trichomonas can increase your risk of catching HIV.

You can get trichomonas by:

- Having unprotected sex with a person who has trichomonas. Most of the time your partner/s has got no symptoms. Your partner/s may not even know they are sick.

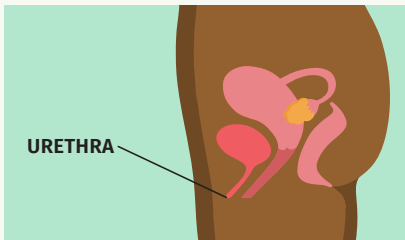
You can't get trichomonas by:

- Sitting on toilet seats.
- Someone sneezing or coughing near you.
- Sharing food, cups or cutlery.
- Things like shaking hands.

You can prevent getting trichomonas by:

- Always using condoms with a water-based lube (lube prevents condom breaking).

Trichomonas can infect a woman's:



- Urethra.
Trichomonas is detected more often in women.

Trichomonas can look like:

- Lots of vaginal discharge that may be yellow-green, frothy, and smell 'fishy'.
- Itchy irritation around the outside of the vagina.
- Pain in the vagina, especially during sex.
- Lower belly pain.
- Burning or stinging feeling when urinating.
- The need to urinate more often.

Trichomonas often has no symptoms, so you may not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s.

Testing:

- A urine test and/or swab for discharge will show if you have trichomonas..

Treatment:

- Trichomonas is treated with an antibiotic tablet.
- Avoid drinking alcohol during treatment for 24 hours after taking medicine.
- No sex for 7 days whilst you are on treatment, as it might take a while for the medicine to work.

Follow up testing:

After you have completed your treatment, you need to come back to clinic after 4 weeks if you still have symptoms.

Consequences if not treated

If you don't get treatment for trichomonas, it can cause:

- Not being able to have babies.
- Cervical cancer if there is a wart virus infection as well.

Trichomonas and pregnancy

Untreated trichomonas can lead to not being able to have babies.



- If you have trichomonas and you are pregnant you can make your unborn baby sick through premature delivery and low birth weight for baby.
- All pregnant women should get tested for Trich at their first visit and then throughout their pregnancy.

Not judging you or your partner, need to be safe for baby.

Contact tracing

Your partner/s who you had sex with recently need to know so that they can get tested and treated to be safe.

Often you won't see the symptoms of trich, so you might not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s. It's confidential.

Better to still get checked.

Sexual Health Yarning *Our Way* WOMEN'S BUSINESS

HIV *Human Immunodeficiency Virus*

If you don't get treatment, HIV can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). HIV is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Having another STI increases your chance of HIV transmission.

You can get HIV by:

- Having unprotected sex with a person who has HIV.
- Being exposed to the blood of someone who has HIV through:
 - Sharing used needles, syringes and tourniquets.
 - Sharing tattooing or piercing equipment.
 - Needlestick injuries.
 - Contact with blood from injury during contact sports.

Babies can get HIV through pregnancy and from breast milk. Most of the time your partner/s has got no symptoms. Your partner/s may not even know they are sick.

You can't get HIV by:

- Hugging, kissing and things like shaking hands.
- Sitting on toilet seats.
- Mosquito bites.
- Sneezing or coughing.
- Sharing food, cups or cutlery.

You can prevent getting HIV by:

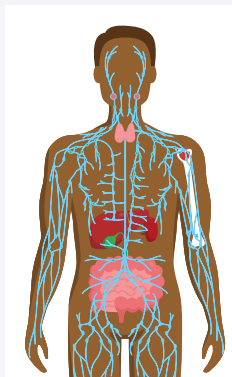
- Always using condoms with water-based lube (lube prevents condom breaking).
- Covering up open wounds.
- Not sharing needles, tattooing or piercing equipment.

There are treatments you can take to prevent getting HIV if you know you are at risk.

HIV can infect:

HIV is a blood borne virus that can damage the immune system and make it difficult for the body to fight off simple infections.

HIV often has no symptoms, so you may not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s.



HIV can look like:

- Fever.
- Rash.
- Swollen glands.
- Diarrhoea.
- Weight loss.
- Always tired.

You may not have all the symptoms, but better to still get checked.

Testing:

- A blood test will show if you have HIV.
- Point-of-Care testing if available.

Treatment:

- HIV is effectively managed with antiretroviral tablets.
- There is no effective cure for HIV, it's a lifelong infection.

PEP and PrEP (speak to doctor)

PEP (*post-exposure prophylaxis*): PEP is an anti-HIV medication for someone who might have been exposed to HIV.

PrEP (*pre-exposure prophylaxis*): PrEP is an anti-HIV medication used to prevent HIV. It can be taken by people who do not have HIV but are at risk of getting it.

Follow up testing:

You need to come back to clinic to speak to your doctor about follow up testing.

Consequences if not treated

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is the most advanced stage of a HIV infection. It is when your immune system is at its weakest.

If HIV isn't treated, it puts you at greater risk of developing other serious health conditions. You need to be tested to start treatment—it's a lifelong infection.

If you have HIV, you can give it to a pregnant mum and make her and her unborn baby sick.

Contact tracing

Your partner/s who you had sex with and/or shared injecting equipment with (back to last known negative HIV test result) need to know so that they can get tested and treated to be safe.

Often you won't see the symptoms of HIV, so you might not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s. It's confidential.

Better to still get checked.

Hepatitis B *Hep B*

Hepatitis B is transmitted by blood-to-blood contact and is the most common liver virus in the world. Hep B is caused by the Hepatitis B virus and increases your chances of getting liver cancer. You can get vaccinated against Hep B.

You can get Hep B by:

- Having unprotected sex with a person who has Hep B.
- Being exposed to the blood of someone who has Hep B through:
 - Sharing used needles, syringes, and tourniquets.
 - Sharing tattooing or piercing equipment.
 - Needlestick injuries.
 - Contact with blood from injury during contact sports.

You can't get Hep B by:

- Hugging, kissing and things like shaking hands.
- Sitting on toilet seats.
- Mosquito bites.
- Sneezing or coughing.
- Sharing food, cups or cutlery.

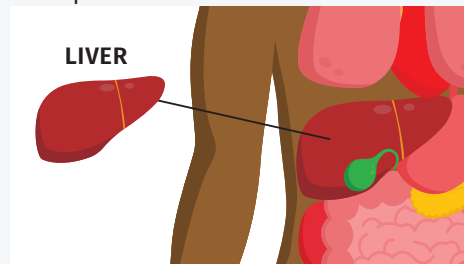
You can prevent getting Hep B by:

- Always using condoms with a water-based lube (lube prevents condom breaking).

- Covering up open wounds.
- Not sharing personal items like toothbrushes and razors.
- Not sharing needles, tattooing or piercing equipment.
- Getting the Hep B vaccine.

Hep B can infect:

- The liver and cause inflammation. Hep B is a blood borne virus.



Hep B can look like:

- Dark urine, pale faeces.
- Always tired and have belly pain.
- Jaundice (your skin and eyes look yellow).
- Feeling sick (nausea) and a fever.

You may not have all the symptoms, but better to still get checked.

Testing:

- A blood test will show if you have Hep B.

Treatment:

- Hep B is sometimes treated with anti-viral tablets.
- There is still a risk of lifelong infection even with tablets.
- Lots of rest and fluids.
- Don't share items like needles, toothbrushes and razors.
- No sex whilst you are on treatment.

Follow up testing:

- You need to come back to clinic to speak to your doctor about follow up testing.

Hep B can be acute or chronic:

Acute Hep B means you are sick for less than 6 months. Chronic Hep B means the virus lasts for more than 6 months and can be a lifelong illness. Hep B often has no symptoms, so you may not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s.

Consequences if not treated

If you don't get treatment for Hep B it can cause:

- Chronic Hep B.
- Liver damage.
- Liver cancer.

If you have Hep B, you can give it to a pregnant mum and make her and her unborn baby sick

Contact tracing

Your partner/s who you had sex with and/or shared injecting equipment with during the last 6 months need to know so that they can get tested and treated to be safe.

Often you won't see the symptoms of Hep B, so you might not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s. It's confidential.

Better to still get checked.

Hepatitis C *Hep C*

Hep C is transmitted by blood-to-blood contact. In Australia Hep C is mostly spread through the sharing of injecting and piercing equipment. Hep C is caused by the Hepatitis C virus and can lead to liver damage. There is an effective cure for Hep C now.

You can get Hep C:

- Being exposed to the blood of someone who has Hep C through:
 - Sharing used needles, syringes, and tourniquets.
 - Sharing tattooing or piercing equipment.
 - Needlestick injuries.
 - Contact with blood from injury during contact sports.
- Having unprotected sex with a person who has Hep C.

You can't get Hep C by:

- Hugging, kissing and things like shaking hands.
- Sitting on toilet seats.
- Mosquito bites.
- Sneezing or coughing.
- Sharing food, cups or cutlery.

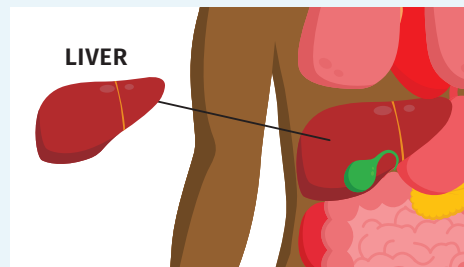
You can prevent getting Hep C by:

- Always using condoms with a water-based lube (lube prevents condom breaking).
- Covering up open wounds.

- Not sharing personal items like toothbrushes and razors.
- Not sharing needles, tattooing or piercing equipment.

Hep C can infect:

- The liver and cause inflammation. Hep C is a blood borne virus.



Hep C can look like:

- Dark urine, pale faeces.
- Always tired and have belly pain.
- Jaundice (your skin and eyes look yellow).
- Feeling sick (nausea) and a fever.

You may not have all the symptoms, but better to still get checked.

Testing:

- A blood test will show if you have Hep C.
- Point-of-Care testing if available.

Treatment:

- Hep C is treated with anti-viral tablets.
- It can lead to cure.
- Lots of rest and fluids.
- Don't share items like needles, toothbrushes and razors.
- No sex whilst you are on treatment, as it might take a while for the medicine to work.

Follow up testing:

- You need to come back to clinic to speak to your doctor about follow up testing.

Hep C can be acute or chronic:

Acute Hep C means you are sick for less than 6 months. Chronic Hep C means the virus stays in your liver for more than 6 months and can be a lifelong illness. Hep C often has no symptoms, so you may not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s.

Consequences if not treated

If you don't get treatment for Hep C it can cause:

- Chronic Hep C.
- Liver damage.
- Liver cancer.

If you have Hep C, you can give it to a pregnant mum and make her and her unborn baby sick.

Contact tracing

Those you have shared injecting equipment with recently need to know so that they can get tested and treated to be safe.

Often you won't see the symptoms of Hep C, so you might not know you have an infection, but you can still give it to your partner/s. It's confidential.

Better to still get checked.