

STDs

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about the causes and effects of various sexually transmitted diseases. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are passed by sexual contact with another person. STDs can be caused by bacteria, viruses, or parasites.

1a. Bacterial

Chlamydia is caused by bacteria and is one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases among young people. It affects the urinary tract and the genitals. If left untreated, it can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease. Chlamydia does not have very obvious warning signs or symptoms, so often, this disease will get left untreated.

Pelvic inflammatory disease, also known as PID, can be caused by bacteria such as chlamydia or gonorrhea. If either of these two diseases goes untreated, they can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease, which can lead to **sterility** or menstrual problems. Sterility is the inability to reproduce. In men, this means an inability to fertilize oocytes; in women, this is either an inability to produce healthy oocytes or an inability to gestate a baby.

Gonorrhea is another disease that is caused by a bacterium. Diseases that are caused by bacteria can be treated with antibiotics. Sometimes they are hard to detect because the warning signs aren't obvious. In males, gonorrhea will cause painful urination, oozing from the penis and, if it's left untreated, can cause sterility. In women, the symptoms are very hard to notice, and often it will go untreated, which can then lead to sterility.

Syphilis is also caused by bacteria that causes ulcers or **chancres** (painless genital ulcers) on the skin. Syphilis can affect various organs of your body, such as your bones and heart. If left untreated, it can lead to insanity and paralysis. This one, again, can be treated with antibiotics if caught early.



TERMS TO KNOW

Chlamydia

The most common STD in humans, chlamydia is caused by a bacterium that infects the reproductive and urinary tracts; if left untreated it can cause pelvic inflammatory disease.

Pelvic Inflammatory Disease

Inflammation of the uterus, fallopian tubes/oviducts and/or ovaries that can lead to scarring and damage.

Sterility

The inability to reproduce. In men, this means an inability to fertilize oocytes; in women, this is either an inability to produce healthy oocytes or an inability to gestate a baby.

Gonorrhea

Commonly referred to as the clap, gonorrhea is a bacterial infection that can cause painful urination and penile discharge in males and vaginal discharge in females.

Syphilis

Caused by bacteria, syphilis initially presents as a rash or skin lesions, and if left untreated can cause cardiovascular damage and insanity.

Chancere

A painless genital ulcer.

1b. Viral

Genital herpes is caused by a virus. There is no cure for genital herpes. Periodically, sores will develop on the genitals.

Genital warts is when warts or growths will develop on the genitals. This is the result of HPV. HPV stands for Human Papilloma Virus.

Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C are viruses that are transmitted through body fluids, such as blood or semen. This type of virus will attack the liver and inhibit the liver's ability to properly function; it can be a very serious disease.



TERMS TO KNOW

Genital Herpes

A viral infection that can cause sores to develop on the mouth or reproductive organs, genital herpes is an incurable disease.

Genital Warts

Caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), genital warts appear on reproductive organs and the anus and can increase the chance of developing certain cancers.

Hepatitis B

A retroviral infection of the liver that is spread through sexual contact and is very curable in adults.

1c. Parasites

Trichomoniasis is a disease that's caused by a parasite. Trichomoniasis leads to the urethra becoming inflamed, which can cause painful urination. However, this disease can be treated with antibiotics.



TERM TO KNOW

Trichomoniasis

A protozoan parasite that commonly causes inflammation of the vagina in females.



SUMMARY

This lesson has been an overview of various **sexually transmitted diseases**. Diseases caused by **bacteria** include chlamydia, pelvic inflammatory disease, gonorrhea, and syphilis, while diseases caused by **viruses** include genital herpes, genital warts, and hepatitis. STDs are also caused by **parasites**, such as the disease trichomoniasis.

Good luck!

Source: This work adapted from Sophia Author Amanda Soderlind.



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