

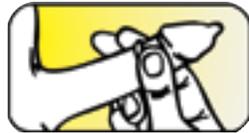
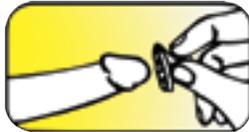


- I have had sex with someone who has an STI.
- I can't remember if I had unsafe sex (e.g. I was drunk or drugged).
- I am not using condoms because I want to have a baby.

If you said yes, even once, get an STI check.

Condoms stop STIs from spreading

- Check date and seal of the packet – old condoms break.
- Open the packet carefully (don't use teeth).
- Roll on when the penis is hard.
- Pinch the tip so air doesn't get trapped as you roll down.
- Put on some water based lube.
- Hold the condom on your penis when you pull out, so semen (cum) doesn't spill out.
- Throw the condom in the bin – not down the toilet.



Where to get help

- See your local health clinic or doctor
- Call the **Sexual Health Helpline**
9227 6178 metro
1800 198 205 country

For more information visit

www.healthywa.wa.gov.au or
www.couldihaveit.com.au



This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

Cover illustrations by Andrew Allingham

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All about syphilis



Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are caused by germs getting inside you when you have sex with someone who has the infection. Anyone who has vaginal, anal (bum) or oral (mouth) sex without a condom can get an STI.

You can easily get help and treatment if you have an STI.

Syphilis (say Si-fi-lis)

Syphilis (also called the pox) is an STI that can make you sick.

Both men and women get a sore, usually on their private parts. The sore is not painful, so sometimes you don't notice it. The sore will go away by itself, but the syphilis germs stay in the body.

Later, if you don't get treated, you get a rash all over including the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet.

The rash will also go away by itself, but syphilis germs still stay in the body.

People can carry syphilis germs for many, years, and the germs can damage their brains, hearts and other parts of their body.

You can't tell if a person has syphilis by looking at them.

Syphilis in pregnancy

If a pregnant woman has syphilis and is not treated early, the baby could be at risk.

Women need to get a check before or as soon as they get pregnant so syphilis can be treated and their babies don't get sick.

What if I think I have it?

The only way to test for syphilis is a blood test at the clinic. If there is a sore, the clinic may check it too.

If you have syphilis, you will get medicine (antibiotics). Early treatment works really well.

When you have finished the medicine, go back to the clinic for another test to make sure you are cured.

People you have had sex with

If you have been treated for an STI, it is important to let your sex partner(s) know. If you want, the clinic can do it for you without telling anyone your name.

If you or your sex partners are not treated, you may get that STI again!

There is also a website that you can use to send your sex partner(s) a text message (SMS) or email without using your name. Visit www.bettertoknow.org.au

What if I don't get treated?

The syphilis germs stay in your body until you get treated.

If you don't get treated, you will pass it on to anyone you have sex with.

Even if you have no sores or other signs of syphilis, it can still be damaging you on the inside. It can make you very sick, and some damage will be permanent.

Syphilis can make serious health problems for babies before they are born.

Early treatment works really well.

How do I stop syphilis?

- Have an STI check if you are at risk. (Am I at risk? See below).
- Use condoms and water-based lube every time you have sex.
- Stay with one partner.
- Have regular health checks.

Am I at risk?

You should get an STI check if any of these statements are true for you:

- I have had unsafe sex (without a condom, condom not used properly, condom fell off or condom broke).
- I have had a new partner or more than one partner in the last year.
- I have discharge, pain, or sores in my sex parts.