

# What different kinds of STIs are there?

There are many different STIs that are easily transmitted. They respond well to treatment if they are diagnosed early.

**Syphilis** is a bacterial STI. In Switzerland, it particularly affects men who have sex with men. If left untreated, it can cause serious, and even life-threatening problems.

**Gonorrhoea** is a bacterial STI that can cause inflammation. If left untreated, the inflammation can spread (to the prostate, testicles, pelvis, and rectum).

**Chlamydia** is a very widespread bacterial STI. If left untreated, it can lead to inflammation and to infertility.

There are also other STIs, such as **HPV**, **herpes** and **Mycoplasma genitalium**. Find out more at [drgay.ch/sti](https://drgay.ch/sti)

# And what is HIV?

**HIV** is also a sexually transmitted infection. But remember:

- HIV is only transmitted through unprotected anal or vaginal sex.
- HIV cannot be cured (but it can be treated effectively).
- You can prevent HIV transmission – for example by using condoms, PrEP or TasP.

Find out more at [drgay.ch/hiv](https://drgay.ch/hiv)

# What are STIs?

STI stands for sexually transmitted infection. People who have sex cannot protect themselves from all STIs because they are very easily transmitted. That is why we recommend getting vaccinated, using protection and getting tested regularly – even if you don't have symptoms.

## How are STIs transmitted?

STIs are transmitted when contact with mucous membranes, infected skin sites or bodily fluids occurs. With the exception of HIV, transmission can occur through any sexual practice, for example:

- Through anal or vaginal sex, even if using a condom
- Through oral sex
- Via sex toys
- Through mutual masturbation
- Through kissing

## How will I know if I have an STI?

Often, there are no symptoms. That means if you have an infection, you may not be able to feel anything different or notice it. But you will be able to transmit it to others.

In some cases, you may have symptoms such as a burning sensation when urinating, discharge from the penis, vagina or anus, itching, sore throat, an ulcer at the site of entry (syphilis), general flu-like symptoms or a skin rash.

## How can I get an STI treated?

Generally speaking, STIs are quite easy and quick to treat – especially if they are diagnosed at an early stage. However, if they are left untreated, they can cause serious health problems and spread to other people.

**STIs**  
**Sexually**  
**transmitted**  
**infections**

Find out more about syphilis, gonorrhoea and chlamydia at [drgay.ch/sti](https://drgay.ch/sti)

# HOW YOU CAN PROTECT YOURSELF



## Vaccination

### Hepatitis A/B and HPV:

Only vaccination can protect you from hepatitis A/B and HPV. Infection can have serious consequences. That's why it's always a good idea to get vaccinated.

We recommend vaccination against hepatitis A/B for people of all ages. If you are younger than 27 years old, you should also get an HPV vaccination. Find out more at [drgay.ch/vaccinations](https://drgay.ch/vaccinations)



## Protection

Condoms, PrEP and TasP all protect against HIV transmission. People who have sex cannot reliably protect themselves from other STIs because they are very easily transmitted.

Hepatitis C is transmitted via blood. Transmission through sex is rare and mainly occurs in the case of rougher sexual practices (such as BDSM or fisting) or in the case of substance use.

We recommend:

- Protecting yourself against HIV: safer sex
- Protecting yourself against hepatitis C: safer use



## Testing

The only way to know if you have an STI is to get tested. Testing consists of a blood sample for HIV and syphilis and swabs taken from three sites (oral, genital and anal swabs) for chlamydia and gonorrhoea.

I am a man or a trans person and ...	So I get tested ...
I have sex with men.	→ at least once a year.
I have sex with approximately two men per month.	→ every 6 months.
I have sex with approximately four men per month.	→ every 3 months.
I am taking PrEP.	→ at my regular medical check-up.
I am HIV-positive.	→ at my regular medical check-up.
my sexual partner has an STI.	→ in consultation with a specialist.
I have symptoms such as a burning sensation, discharge, itching, ulcer or rash (genitals, anus, throat).	→ immediately.
I am starting a monogamous relationship.	→ after 3 months. (Until then, continue with measures to protect against HIV transmission.)



## Treatment

Most STIs respond well to treatment. Treatment helps prevent damage to your health and helps prevent the spread of pathogens.



## Informing your partner(s)

There is no need to be ashamed about having an STI. They are part and parcel of sex. They are no one's fault.

You can help prevent STI transmissions. If you test positive, inform your sexual partner(s) so that they can get tested and get treated if necessary.

Contact us for advice at: [drgay.ch/contacts](https://drgay.ch/contacts)