



# 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

- 1 STI and STD basically mean the same thing.** Sexually transmitted infection (STI) is the infection that is transmitted from person to person. Sexually transmitted disease (STD) is the disease that happens once a person is infected.
- 2 STIs are spread through genital-to-genital contact and through unprotected oral, vaginal, or anal sex.** STIs can also spread from mother to baby during pregnancy and birth. Also, STIs don't always cause any symptoms, so the infection can spread easily from one person to another without them knowing it.
- 3 Use condoms to protect yourself from STIs.** Use condoms for vaginal, anal, and oral sex. Dental dams can also be used for oral sex. Remember that you're only protected where you're covered. Birth control pills will not protect you from STIs. Use a condom even if you or your partner is on the pill.
- 4 Bacterial STIs—such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis—can be cured with antibiotics.** However, without treatment they can cause serious health problems, such as infertility and organ damage.
- 5 There is no cure for most viral STIs and they can be hard to treat.**
  - There is no cure for genital herpes or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), but there are treatments.
  - Hepatitis B can cause serious liver disease, but there is a vaccine that can help prevent it.
  - There is no treatment for human papillomavirus (HPV), but there are vaccines which can prevent infection. If left untreated, HPV can cause cervical cancer in women. It's also linked to certain rare cancers in men.
- 6 STIs caused by parasites—like pubic lice (crabs)—can be cured.**
  - Lice and scabies can be treated with special creams, lotions, or shampoos.
  - Trichomoniasis can be treated with antibiotics. If left untreated it can cause a very serious condition called pelvic inflammatory disease.



