

## Sexually Transmitted Infections – Testing Considerations

Disease	Symptoms	Tests done and approximate cost (\$ less than \$10, \$\$ less than \$20)	Other important information ® = Reportable to Public Health Dept
<b>Chlamydia</b>	75% of women and 50% of men have no symptoms. Urinary burning, penile or vaginal discharge, bleeding after intercourse and pelvic pain in women with internal spread of genital infection. Pain and discharge can also occur in throat and rectum if direct contact.	Specimen from genitals or urine will be positive by 7 days after exposure. Throat and rectal exposure must be tested separately. \$	Common infection in young adults. Untreated or repeat infections in women may cause chronic infection and pain, infertility or tubal pregnancy; in men prostatitis or epididymitis. Condoms for prevention.®
<b>Gonorrhea</b>	Women rarely have symptoms early, but can have vaginal discharge, pelvic pain, fever after several weeks. Men usually have penile discharge and urinary pain within one week of exposure. Symptoms can also occur in throat and rectum if direct contact.	Same as above \$	Less prevalent than Chlamydia, and more likely to cause obvious symptoms. Long term complications are similar to above. Condoms for protection.®
<b>HIV</b>	Early symptoms of flu-like illness rarely noted. Late symptoms of immune system dysfunction with severe infections, fatigue, weight loss.	Testing for antibodies to the virus may be done by blood or mouth secretions. Test becomes positive 6 weeks to 6 months after exposure. \$	Testing important for early identification and treatment to prevent or slow progression, prevent infection of partners. Condoms for prevention. ®
<b>Syphilis</b>	Painless sore at point of infection 3-12 weeks after exposure may last weeks. A non-itchy rash may appear several months later. May have no symptoms until late stage with destruction of multiple organs including nervous system	When sore is present, special tests may identify infection. Blood testing positive 2-8 weeks after exposure. \$	Syphilis is on the rise, especially in men having sex with men (MSM). Unusual rashes or painless sore should prompt testing. ®
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	May have no symptoms or may experience nausea, jaundice (yellowing of skin or whites of eyes and dark urine). Most college students have been immunized.	Blood testing for the virus and antibodies to the virus. Those immunized will usually test positive to routine antibody testing. \$\$	Hepatitis B is spread by blood or sexual fluids. Sharing razors, toothbrushes, or IV drugs are also risks. Immunization is available. ®
<b>Herpes (HSV)</b>	Viral skin infection causing blisters and painful ulcers usually occurring around the mouth in HSV type I and on genitals in HSV type 2. Symptoms often recur. Can also carry this virus without symptoms. Once infected virus persists in body indefinitely, although frequency of outbreaks and risk of transmission decreases over time.	Cultures from acute sore. Blood tests for antibodies when diagnosis is unclear, patient is high risk, or results of testing will change behavior. \$\$	HSV I usually occurs around the mouth as cold sores (most people have had exposure to this). Can be spread by oral-genital contact. HSV-2 can be transmitted by someone who has never noticed sores, or when sores are not present. Medication can treat outbreaks and decrease transmission. Condoms somewhat helpful
<b>Genital Warts/ HPV</b>	Viral skin infection which may cause warts on the genitals, vagina or anus. Rarely occur in the throat. Some strains cause infection on the cervix which can be precancerous or cancerous if untreated. Virus can be carried without visible signs.	Visual exam by clinician. Pap smear in women for cervical HPV and precancerous changes. \$\$	Skin to skin transmission even without presence of warts. Topical treatment can decrease warts, but cannot cure the infection. Condoms somewhat helpful.
<b>Molluscum Contagiosum</b>	Viral skin infection spread by close contact. In young adults, the genital area is often infected, causing irritated bumps with depressed centers.	Visual exam by clinician. Treatment is chemical or physical removal of lesions.	Although not necessarily an STI, adults may spread this genitally by contact. May resolve spontaneously. Treatable.
<b>Crabs and other parasites</b>	Small bugs that live on hair follicles and cause itching and irritation. Can be spread by close contact or sharing clothes and bedding.	Visual exam may find egg sacs on hair shafts or sometimes adult lice.	Treatment is with over the counter products. Scrupulous cleaning of clothes and bedding and treatment of contacts to avoid reinfestation.

**For More Information:** The Student Health Center website [health.sfsu.edu](http://health.sfsu.edu) has more information and links to reliable sources of information on STIs such as [www.ashastd.org](http://www.ashastd.org) and <https://www.cdc.gov/std/>