

# CareSphere Health Tip: STIs - Prevention, Testing & Treatment

Hey friend! 🙌 At CareSphere, we know sexual health matters — and asking questions is **100% okay!** This guide gives you factual, stigma-free information on STIs, how to prevent them, and how to get care safely. We're here to support you every step of the way with honest, nonjudgmental guidance that puts your health first. 💙

# Why It Matters

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can affect anyone — regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, or background. Understanding STIs isn't about fear or shame; it's about taking control of your health and making informed decisions. When you have the right knowledge, you can protect yourself and your partners while maintaining confidence in your sexual health.

STIs are more common than many people realize, and that's completely normal! The key is staying informed and proactive. Many STIs don't show obvious symptoms right away, which means you could have an infection without knowing it. That's why education and regular testing are so crucial — they're your best tools for staying healthy.



## Protect Yourself & Partners

Knowledge helps you make safer choices and communicate openly about health with everyone you're intimate with



## Early Detection

Catching infections early means simpler, more effective treatment and fewer complications down the line



## Stay Confident

Understanding your health empowers you to feel secure and positive about your sexual wellbeing

**Did you know?** Many STIs show **no symptoms at first**, which is why regular testing is so important! 🧐 You could feel completely fine while having an infection that needs treatment. That's normal, and it's exactly why testing is recommended for sexually active people.

# Prevention Strategies

Prevention is your first line of defense against STIs, and there are several effective strategies you can use. The good news is that most of these prevention methods are simple, accessible, and can easily become part of your regular routine. Whether you're in a long-term relationship or dating casually, these practices help protect your health and give you peace of mind.

01

## Use Condoms Consistently

Male or female condoms protect against most STIs when used correctly every single time you have sex. Make them part of your routine — don't wait until the last minute. Keep them accessible and check expiration dates regularly.

02

## Talk Openly with Partners

Have honest conversations about sexual history and health before becoming intimate. This might feel awkward at first, but it's a sign of respect and care for each other. You deserve partners who value open communication.

03

## Get Vaccinated

HPV and Hepatitis B vaccines can prevent certain infections entirely. Talk to your healthcare provider about which vaccines are right for you and make sure you're up to date on your immunizations.

04

## Limit Partners & Practice Safe Behaviors

While having multiple partners doesn't make you a bad person, it does increase risk. If you have multiple partners, regular testing becomes even more important. Consider what level of risk feels right for you.

### **Quick Challenge**

Today, make a note of when your **last STI test** was. If you can't remember or it's been over a year, consider scheduling a check-up. You can often get tested at clinics, health centers, or through your regular doctor. **Knowledge = power!** ✨

# Testing & Screening

Regular testing is the only way to **know for sure** whether you have an STI. Testing isn't something to be afraid of or ashamed about — it's a routine part of healthcare, just like getting your blood pressure checked or having a dental cleaning. The process is quick, confidential, and often free or low-cost at many clinics and health centers.

When you get tested, healthcare providers can screen for multiple infections at once. Common tests include HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis. Depending on your sexual history and activities, your provider might recommend additional screenings. The testing itself is usually simple — sometimes it's just a urine sample, blood test, or swab. Results typically come back within a few days to a week.



## Schedule Regular Tests

Get tested regularly, especially if you have new partners or multiple partners



## Quick & Confidential

Tests are fast, private, and often free at local clinics



## Comprehensive Screening

Ask for HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and other routine tests

**Did you know?** Testing early means treatment can start sooner, which prevents complications and protects partners! 🦊 When you catch an infection early, treatment is often simpler and more effective. Plus, getting treated means you won't pass the infection to others.

# Treatment & Care

If you test positive for an STI, here's what you need to know: **Most STIs are treatable**, especially when caught early. Many infections can be cured completely with medication, while others can be managed effectively with ongoing treatment. The important thing is to follow your healthcare provider's instructions exactly and complete all prescribed treatments.

Treatment protocols vary depending on which STI you have. Some infections require antibiotics that you take for a specific period of time. Others might need different types of medication or ongoing management. Your healthcare provider will explain exactly what you need and answer all your questions. Don't skip doses or stop treatment early, even if you start feeling better — this is crucial for fully clearing the infection.

## Follow Prescribed Treatment

Take all medication as directed and complete the full course, even if symptoms improve before you finish

## Notify Your Partners

Let recent partners know they should get tested — this isn't about blame, it's about protecting everyone's health

## Follow Up with Testing

Get retested after treatment to confirm the infection is gone and stay on top of regular screening

 **Important tip:** Never feel ashamed to seek help or start treatment. Getting care is a sign of strength and self-care, not weakness or shame. **You are not alone!**  CareSphere provides confidential advice and resources to support you through treatment and beyond.

# Rely on CareSphere

Whenever you have questions, feel uncertain, or want guidance about sexual health, CareSphere is here for you. We provide **confidential, nonjudgmental support** that puts your needs first. Whether you're worried about symptoms, need help finding testing resources, want to talk about prevention, or just have questions, our team is ready to help.

Your sexual health matters, and there's no question that's too small or too awkward to ask. We're here to give you the facts, support, and care you deserve — without judgment, shame, or stigma. Every person who reaches out to us is treated with respect, kindness, and professionalism.

## **Chat Online**

Connect with our team through the CareSphere website for immediate, confidential support and answers to your questions

## **Call or WhatsApp**

Reach out directly at **+250790916548** for personalized guidance and support whenever you need it

## **Send an Email**

Write to [carespheretha@gmail.com](mailto:carespheretha@gmail.com) with your questions or concerns — we respond promptly and confidentially

**Remember:** Sexual health is normal and important. It's something everyone deserves to feel confident about. CareSphere is here to give you the **facts, support, and care** you deserve — no judgment, just help!

★ You deserve to feel good about your health, and we're here to support you every step of the way.