

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 healthywa.wa.gov.au or 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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Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**
Public Health

All about herpes



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What is an STI?

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are caused by germs getting inside 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.

Herpes (say her-pees)

Herpes is an STI that causes sores on or around the genitals (sex parts), mouth or face.

Herpes sores usually start off as a blister and then become painful, open sores. The sores form a scab and go away by themselves in one or two weeks but the virus stays in the body and the herpes sores can come back.

Some people only get sores once but others get herpes sores again and again.

It can take a long time for herpes sores to show up in the body. Some people get sores straight away, but other people take years to get sores. That makes it difficult to tell who the person got herpes from.

Lots of people never know that they have herpes but they can still pass it on to others. Herpes can spread from the mouth to the sex parts when you have oral sex.

You can't tell if you or another person has herpes just by looking at them.

Herpes in pregnancy

Herpes can make your baby very sick. If a pregnant woman has herpes, or if her partner has herpes, she should go to the clinic for a check up. If she has herpes sores when she is ready to have the baby it may need to be born by operation (Caesarean).



What if I think I have it?

If you have sores on your sex parts, go to the clinic for a check up for herpes and other STIs.

If you get herpes it stays in your body, even when there are no sores.

There is no cure for herpes.

If you are getting a lot of sores you can have medicine to stop the sores from coming back. Or if the sores are very painful there is medicine to help them heal faster.

If you have a sore, you are more likely to catch other STIs or the virus (germ) that causes HIV.

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.

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 bettertoknow.org.au.

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

How do I stop herpes?

- Have a 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.
- 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.