



Sexual health is a big deal—as big as your overall physical health. You've probably heard all of this before... the safe sex talk, or why you should always use condoms, birth control and the rest. And let's face it, talking about diseases and infections isn't exactly the most pleasant topic—it's not like you're going to just strike up a conversation on the bus about genital warts!

The only real way to have safe sex is to be abstinent—having no sexual activity at all. So if you are sure that you are ready to have a sexual relationship with someone, learn as much as you can about safer sex first.

I'm sexually active. Why should I use birth control?

Sex can be such an amazing experience, so the last thing you want in the back of your head is, "What will I do if we get pregnant?" That's right—we. Contraception (birth control) is a shared responsibility of both partners. And remember, it only takes one "oops" to get pregnant. For now, it's a good idea to use contraception to avoid an unplanned pregnancy; until you're sure you want and are ready to have a baby.

For dual protection against sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy, consider doubling up by using a condom and an additional method of birth control.

MILLIONS OF SNEAKY SPERM.

AND ALL IT TAKES IS ONE TO GET PREGNANT.

Millions of sneaky sperm are released in one ejaculation, and it only takes one sperm to get pregnant. Pulling-out (also called 'withdrawal') is when the man withdraws his penis from a woman's vagina before ejaculation. Withdrawal really isn't that effective because there may be sperm in the pre-ejaculate (pre-cum), the tiny bit of fluid that escapes a man's penis before he reaches an orgasm.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIS)

What is a sexually transmitted infection?

Think of a sexually transmitted infection, or STI for short, as a sickness that is passed on from person to person during sex, but the person that is passing it on may not know they are sick.

There are 4 different families of STIs—viral, bacterial, parasitic, and fungal. Each family has many types. (See the chart below.) Some have minor consequences while others have lifetime consequences. Bacterial, parasitic, and fungal infections are usually cleared up by the use of prescription medication. Viral infections are the most problematic because they are chronic infections which usually require ongoing treatment.



How are STIs spread?

Infections can be transferred through exchanges of body fluids like blood, semen, vaginal secretions, and breast milk. Different types of sexual activities that transfer infections include oral, vaginal, or anal intercourse, as well as skin-to-skin contact. Sexual activity does not mean only acts involving penetration. It also includes sexual contact. You can catch some STIs just by touching or kissing an infected area. Infections can also be spread while getting a tattoo or piercing from an unsterile needle.



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIS)



The important thing you need to know is that most STIs do not have any visible signs or symptoms, which means that you can have an STI and not even know you have it. If signs and symptoms do show up, they appear in different ways.

Is there a cure for STIs?

- Some STIs can be cured (chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis); others are viruses (HPV, HIV, genital herpes) that stay in your body for a long time.
- Some STIs may go away and come back over and over again; others you might be stuck with forever.
- Some STIs can make it impossible for you to ever have children if they are not treated.
- AIDS, which is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), can even kill you.

Can I prevent getting an STI?

Most STIs can be prevented by using condoms (but they are not as good at protecting against HPV), so it's your responsibility to protect yourself!

Here are a few pointers to help:

- Latex condoms are your best defence against STIs and they're also really effective at preventing pregnancy too.
- Don't have sex with someone who has, or has had, a lot of partners.
- Avoid having sex when you're drunk or on drugs. When your head is not right, it's easy to make decisions you'll regret.
- Get tested regularly.

If you're having sex without a condom, you're putting yourself at risk of disease. It is important to use a latex condom for any sexual activity and to use a dental dam for oral sex. Remember, you're still young, and some of these diseases can stick with you for life.

Dual protection







Female condom

Dual protection means using a condom with any other form of birth control to protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and to increase the usefulness of the birth control method you are using.

It's never too late to take action.

If you have tested positive for an STI, make sure you seek treatment from your health-care professional as soon as possible. You will also be asked to contact all the partners you have been sexually active with, to avoid spreading the infection. It is important to treat STIs right away, as many are easily curable, but may cause infertility or even death if left untreated.

Testing and screening methods

The early detection and treatment of STIs is critical to prevent further spread of infections.

Testing and screening approaches differ by infection and sex, and may vary across Canada. The main methods of testing/screening are:

Blood test: syphilis, genital herpes, hepatitis B, HIV



Urine test: chlamydia, gonorrhea



Physical exam: HPV, trichomoniasis, pubic lice, scabies



Swab/smear: chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, genital herpes, trichomoniasis, yeast infection, HPV



Smear (Pap test)



Male urethra swab



Female cervical/vaginal swab







MYTH 1

Everyone is having sex. I should be too.

Sex is a personal issue. The decision to have sex or not, or to begin a sexual relationship with a new partner, is a choice that is different for everyone. Being comfortable with the decision is what is important—regardless of what others are doing.

MYTH 2

You cannot get an STI from giving or receiving oral sex.

Compared to all other forms of sex, oral sex is considered a lower-risk sexual activity. But "low risk" does not mean "no risk"—there is no such thing as 100 percent safe sex, and oral sex is no exception. The majority of common STIs can be spread through either performing or receiving oral sex. Play it safe during oral sex by using a condom on the penis, and a dental dam (a thin latex sheet) spread over the vagina.

MYTH 3

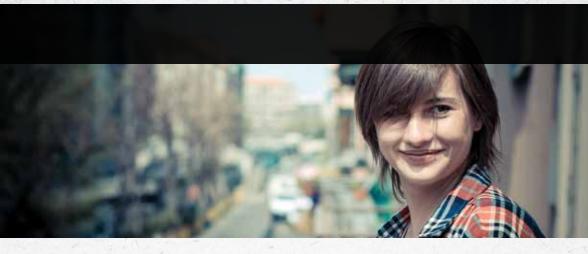
A guy can't get a girl pregnant if he doesn't have an orgasm.

Men often release a small amount of semen (cum) before they ejaculate. Sometimes this is called "pre-cum." This semen still contains sperm and can certainly get a woman pregnant.

MYTH 4

Anal sex is safe.

Anal sex is risky business. Any type of sexual activity puts you at risk for sexually transmitted infections. The risk of pregnancy from anal sex is incredibly low. However, there is always a possibility of pregnancy when sperm are anywhere near the genital organs. Using condoms with anal intercourse will decrease the chance of becoming pregnant, as well as decrease the chances of getting an STI. A second, more reliable form of birth control may also be used for improved pregnancy protection.



MYTH 5

Contraceptives protect against STIs.

The only contraceptive that offers such protection is the condom. Even other barrier methods, such as the diaphragm, do nothing to keep bacterial STIs out of the vagina, and the pill, the patch, the ring, the injection, and the IUS offer no STI protection at all. So remember to protect yourself against STIs. Always use a condom, every time, and with every partner.

MYTH 6

If you really love someone, sex is the only way to show them.

There are many ways for people to show their affection for one another. While sex can be a rewarding expression of feelings between partners, there are also non-sexual ways of showing love. Don't be pressured into conforming to someone else's ideas. Be creative!

MYTH 7

I don't need to worry because only people who sleep around get STIs.

Anyone who is sexually active is at risk of contracting an STI—even if it is their first time. All it takes is engaging in sexual activity with one infected partner.

MYTH 8

A girl can't get pregnant when she has sex for the first time.

A woman who is ovulating can get pregnant on her very first time having intercourse, regardless of her age or her sexual history.



HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV)



What is HPV?

The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common STI in Canada. Nearly 75% of sexually-active Canadians will get the virus at some point in their lives. HPV is a highly contagious virus that is spread by skin-to-skin contact (penetration is not required) or during genital, anal, or oral sex. Often, it has no visible signs or symptoms. There are more than 100 kinds of HPV, 40 of which are spread through sexual contact. Some of these can lead to, or cause, genital warts and cancer.

Am I at risk?

The risk of HPV infection is highest among people aged 15 to 24. The earlier you become sexually active, the greater your exposure to the risk of HPV infection.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HPV

- · Be careful
- · Get screened
- Get vaccinated

How do I know I have it?

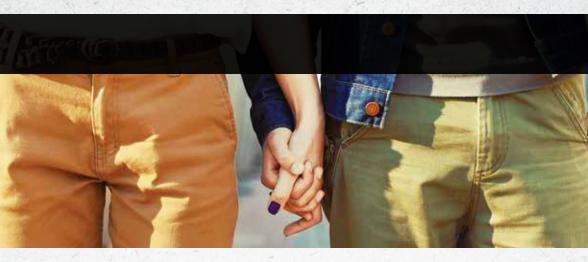
You might not. Since not all HPV infections have symptoms, you may not be able to tell if you (or your partner) are infected. Genital warts are often the only visible sign that someone has an HPV infection.

What are genital warts?

Genital warts are ugly growths that look like small cauliflower. They can be red or white, can sometimes cause itching or burning, and are found on or inside the sex organs in both females and males. If left untreated, they very rarely develop into cancer.

Is there a cure?

There is no cure for the virus once you are infected. There are treatments for the warts and cell changes caused by the virus, but these do not cure the virus itself. If infected, the immune system will eventually clear the virus in most people. However, this does not mean that people will be immune. They can still get another HPV infection in the future.



How do I protect myself?

Condoms are a good way to protect yourself from many kinds of sexually transmitted infections. Use them consistently. But when it comes to HPV, a condom does not provide full protection. You can still get HPV from infected skin not covered by the condom.

Vaccination is up to 99% effective at preventing the HPV types responsible for most genital warts and HPV-related cancers. There are three vaccines that are available and approved for use in Canada, each of which protects against certain HPV types.

Studies have shown that the vaccine is safe. Over 50 million doses of the vaccine have been given in North America. Other than minor side effects (like pain from the needle), people who get the vaccine are not at risk for major complications.

Who should get vaccinated?

Vaccination has been approved for use in Canada for females aged 9 to 45 and males aged 9 to 26.

The younger you are when you get vaccinated, the better. It's best to get vaccinated before you're sexually active since it will protect you before you are exposed to the virus.

You can be vaccinated if you are already sexually active or have already had an HPV infection because you probably have not been exposed to all types of HPV that you can be protected against.

CANCER AND HPV

HPV can be linked to various types of cancers, both in females and males. In females, HPV has been linked to cancer of the cervix, vulva, and vagina; in males, to cancer of the penis. In both females and males, it has been linked to cancer of the anus, mouth, and throat. These cancers do not usually develop until later on in life, but you should make sure that you start protecting yourself now.





MYTH 1

HPV, HIV, and Herpes are the same thing.

HPV, HIV, and herpes are different viruses that can affect you differently. The one thing they have in common is that they are spread from person to person through sexual contact—they are all sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

MYTH 2

HPV only affects girls and young women.

75% of sexually active Canadians will have at least one HPV infection in their lifetime. Both males and females can be infected with HPV. Both can have genital warts, and both can develop cancer from HPV infection.

MYTH 3

If I use a condom, I can't get HPV or any other STI.

Condoms can protect against most STIs including HIV/AIDS, but do not provide complete protection against HPV. The virus can spread through skin-to-skin contact with infected areas of the skin not covered by the condom (such as the scrotum, anus, or vulva).

MYTH 4

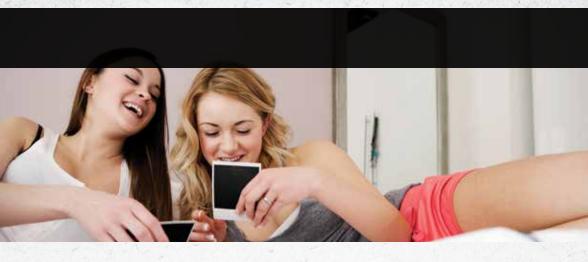
If I only touch my partner and have oral sex, I can't get HPV.

The virus spreads through skin-to-skin contact with the penis, scrotum, vagina, vulva, or anus of a person who has the HPV infection. Kissing or touching that person's sex organs with your mouth (oral sex) can spread HPV. It is not necessary to have intercourse to get the virus.

MYTH 5

You can tell if your partner has HPV.

You can't physically see whether a person has an HPV infection, unless the person has genital warts. Many people with HPV don't have any visible signs—but they can still spread the virus.



MYTH 6

HPV will not affect me because I have only one partner. It only affects people who "sleep around."

Any person who has sexual contact with another person can get HPV. You may be at risk even if you have only one partner because your partner may have had other partners in the past.

You can have sex with an infected person without knowing the person has the virus.

You can spread the virus without knowing you are infected because you may not have any visible symptoms. Each partner in a sexual relationship may carry the infection for many years without knowing it.

MYTH 7

If I get HPV, it means I'll get cancer.

The majority of people will get HPV at least once in their lifetime, but only a small number of infections will cause cancer. Like other infections, HPV may go away without any treatment or problems—but low-risk HPV types 6 and 11 may cause warts in the genital area, and at least 15 high-risk types of HPV may cause cancer.

MYTH 8

After being vaccinated, you no longer need a Pap test.

HPV vaccination does not replace the need for regular Pap tests. The Pap test does not diagnose an HPV infection. It is used to detect cell changes in a woman's cervix before they develop into cancer. Regular Pap tests are a key part of a healthy woman's life, whether or not she has had the HPV vaccination. The vaccines do not protect you from all types of HPV, so there is still a risk of developing cervical cancer if you are infected with one of these other types. If you are female, you should talk to your doctor about when to get a Pap test. In most provinces it will be at age 21.

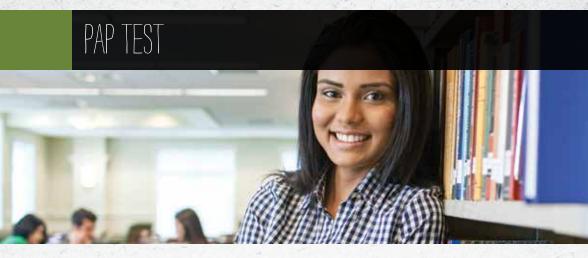
MYTH 9

I do not need to worry about HPV if my girlfriend has had the HPV vaccine.

If your girlfriend has been vaccinated, she is more likely to be free of the HPV types prevented by vaccination.

But she can still carry other types of the HPV virus. Also, if your girlfriend was sexually active before she was vaccinated, she may already have one of the types prevented by vaccination.





"Pelvic exam," "Pap test" or "Pap smear"?

You may have wondered before if there is a difference between a "pelvic exam," a "Pap test" and a "Pap smear." A "Pap test" and "Pap smear" are the same thing—they are a test that involves collecting cells from the cervix and then looking at them through a microscope to make sure they are normal and healthy.

A "pelvic exam" is a little different—it refers to the entire exam of your reproductive organs, part of which is the collection of cells for the Pap test. After the Pap test, your health-care provider will perform a "bimanual exam" to feel if the ovaries and uterus are healthy.

Some people think that a Pap test is a screening test for all sexually transmitted infections. This is not true.

DID YOU KNOW?

The "Pap" test gets its name from a Greek-American cytologist (a doctor who studies cells) named Dr. George Papanicolaou. After initially studying the vaginal secretions of guinea pigs, Dr. Papanicolaou introduced the "vaginal smear" as a way of detecting cancer in the late 1920s.

Here are a few reasons why a pelvic exam is a good idea:

- To make sure that your pelvic organs (uterus, fallopian tubes, and ovaries) are normal.
- To detect infections that can cause vaginal discharge, pelvic pain, or infertility. If you have one of these infections, a regular pelvic exam can help make sure that it's detected early, so you can get treatment before any serious damage is done.
- Probably the best reason to get a pelvic exam is that it includes a Pap test that can detect early stages of cervical cancer. Spotting these early signs of cancer could even save your life.

How do I get a Pap test?

All Canadian provinces offer free Pap tests through their public health-care systems. Make an appointment with your health-care professional. Some young women may be afraid to tell their parents about getting a pelvic exam because they don't want their parents to know that they are sexually active. While it is important to have an open relationship with your parents (and they may be happy to know that you are being responsible about your health), you do not need a parent's permission to have a pelvic exam. You can arrange the exam yourself by making an appointment with your family doctor, gynaecologist, or sexual health clinic professional. Remember that what you tell your doctor is just between the two of you.

BIRTH CONTROL

What kind of birth control methods are there?

The word birth control and contraception mean the same thing, so don't let that mix you up when you are learning about this subject. Contraception or birth control is something you do to prevent pregnancy. There are many options available to you from abstinence (not having sex at all) to hormonal, non-hormonal, as well as natural (calendar, sympto-thermal control, and withdrawal) contraception methods. Some of these methods are reversible (can prevent pregnancy on a temporary basis, for as long as you choose to do so), while others are permanent. The effectiveness of the method in preventing pregnancy also varies from one option to another. You will find more information on the different birth control methods on pages 14 and 15.

To review all your options, go to sexandu.ca and find out which type of contraceptive method suits your lifestyle, personal habits, and medical history best. Then make an appointment with a health-care professional to discuss your choice and to get a prescription, if required.

CONTROLLING YOUR PERIODS WITH BIRTH CONTROL

Is your period supposed to start next week, at the same time as an upcoming event such as a wedding, holiday, sports competition, or exam? You can delay your period until a more convenient time if you are using certain birth control methods. Go to sexandu.ca for details.

Emergency contraception

Emergency contraception can help prevent unplanned pregnancies following unprotected sexual intercourse or failure of the contraceptive method that you chose, if used as soon as possible. Below are some of the reasons why you might choose emergency contraception, but remember, it is intended for occasional use only, not as a regular method of birth control itself.

- Missed birth control pill, patch, injection, or ring
- · The condom slipped, broke, or leaked
- · No contraception was used
- Error in the calculation of the fertility period
- Non-consensual sexual intercourse (sexual assault)

There are two types of emergency contraception methods to choose from. Hormonal emergency contraception, also known as "the morning after pill", is now available in Canadian pharmacies without a prescription. The effectiveness of hormonal emergency contraception is highest when taken within 24 hours after unprotected sexual intercourse and declines over time. Some factors such as weight may also decrease the effectiveness of these pills, so it is a good idea to speak with a health-care professional to make sure this is the right choice for you. The second method is a copper intrauterine device (IUD), which is inserted by a health-care professional and available by prescription only.



BIRTH CONTROL



Hormonal birth control

(oral contraceptive pill)



Frequency

Every day

Tablets taken once a day, at a specific time. They come in packs of 21, 28, or 91 pills.

Patch

(contraceptive patch)



Once a week

A patch placed on the buttocks, upper outer arms, lower abdomen, or upper torso (but not the breast). It is applied once a week, for three weeks, and then removed for one week (1 patch-free week).

Ring (vaginal ring)



Once a month

A flexible, nearly transparent ring is inserted in the vagina (by you) for three weeks, and then removed for one week (1 ring-free week).

Shot (injectable

contraceptive)



Every 3 months

An injection given by a health-care professional in the upper arm or buttocks every three months.

IUS

(intrauterine system)



Every 3 or 5 years

A T-shaped device inserted into the uterus and removed from the uterus by a health-care professional. It can remain in place for 3 or 5 years, depending on the type.

Natural methods

There are many variations of natural birth control. Visit sexandu.ca for more information.

Non-hormonal birth control

Male condom



Frequency

Every time you have sex

A condom is put on the penis and, when used properly, protects against pregnancy and STIs.

Female condom



Every time you have sex

A condom is inserted into the vagina and, when used properly, protects against pregnancy and STIs.

IUD

(intrauterine device)



Every 3, 5, or 10 years

This is a T-shaped device, like the IUS but without hormones. It is inserted by a health-care professional and is good for 3, 5, or 10 years, depending on the type.

Sponge



Every time you have sex

It is used only at the time of intercourse. This disposable sponge containing spermicide is placed at the cervix and kills sperm before they can enter.

Cervical cap



Every time you have sex

It is used only at the time of intercourse. A deep silicone cap that fits against the cervix and prevents sperm and bacteria from entering.

Diaphragm



Every time you have sex

It is used only at the time of intercourse. The diaphragm is a latex cap that covers the cervix and prevents sperm from getting inside.

Spermicide



Every time you have sex

It is used only at the time of intercourse. By inserting spermicide in front of the cervix, in the vagina, it destroys sperm on contact.

Vasectomy



Permanent

This is intended as a permanent surgical option that may be chosen if you have decided that your family is complete. After an examination to see if a male is a candidate for the procedure, a urologist or a general practitioner performs this procedure under local anesthetic.

Tubal ligation



Permanent

This is intended as a permanent surgical option that may be chosen if you have decided that your family is complete. After a full medical exam and after signing a consent form, a gynaecologist will perform the surgery.





QUIZ CENTRAL A second of the second of the

Now that you have read Sex and HPV: It's time to talk, you should have a much more complete understanding of healthy sexual practices, birth control, and HPV and other STIs. It is time to put this knowledge to the test—complete this series of fun quizzes to graduate from our program!

Feel free to come back to these quizzes any time for a refresher course or to pass them on to anyone you think might benefit from taking them. After all, the key to safe and positive sexual health is information.





MYTH OR FACT?

Read each statement and circle the correct answer.

01	You cannot get pregnant if you have sex for the first time.	MYTH IORI FACT
02	After being vaccinated against HPV, a female no longer needs a Pap test.	MYTH IORI FACT
03	You can get an STI from oral or anal sex.	MYTH IORI FACT
04	STIs can be caused by a virus, bacteria, parasite, or fungus.	MYTH IORI FACT
05	You can tell if your partner has HPV.	MYTH IORI FACT
06	Only girls get HPV.	MYTH [OR] FACT
07	Using a condom protects against most STIs.	MYTH IORI FACT
08	Contraception/birth control protects against pregnancy.	MYTH IORI FACT
09	Any type of contraception/birth control will protect against STIs.	MYTH IORI FACT
10	More than 40,000 teens get pregnant every year.	MYTH IORI FACT
11	The only method of screening for an STI is by doing a blood test.	MYTH IORI FACT
12	HPV, HIV, and Herpes are the same thing.	MYTH IORI FACT

Correct answers: 1. Myth, 2. Myth, 3. Fact, 4. Fact, 5. Myth, 6. Myth, 7. Fact, 8. Fact, 9. Myth, 10. Fact, 11. Myth, 12. Myth





FILL IN THE BLANKS!

Complete each statement by writing the correct answers in the appropriate spaces.

01	Most HPV infections occur in young people agedto 24.
02	is the most common STI in Canada.
03	Often, there are no visible or
04	There are more than different types of HPV, of which are spread through skin-to-skin contact.
05	Vaccination is up to % effective in preventing HPV types responsible for most cases of genital warts and cervical cancer.
06	% of sexually active Canadians will get at least one HPV infection in their lifetime.
07	In females, HPV can cause cancers of the, vulva, anus, mouth, and throat.
08	In males, cancers of the , , , and throat have been linked to HPV.
09	A is an examination that involves collecting cells from the cervix to help prevent cervical cancer.

Correct answers: 1. 15, 2. HPV, 3. signs or symptoms, 4. 100 / 40, 5. 99, 6. 75, 7. cervix, vagina, 8. penis, anus, mouth, 9. Pap test

NAME THE IMAGE!

Identify the methods of birth control and STI screening by writing the correct name next to the number associated with each illustration.



























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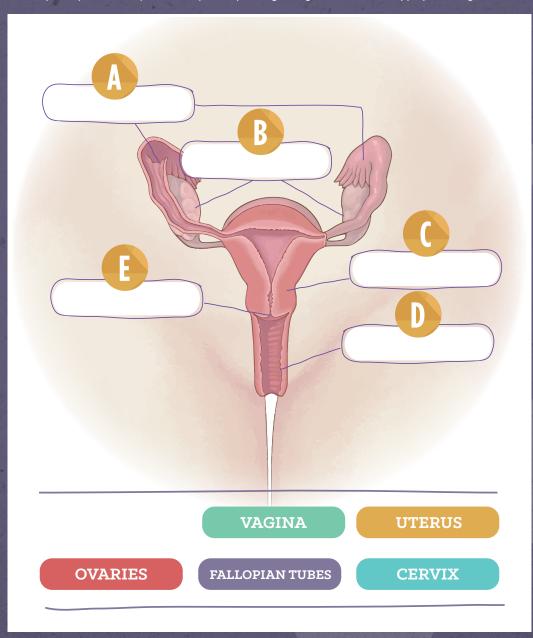
Correct answers:

1. The IUS (intrauterine system), 2. Blood test,
3. Smeat (Pap test), 4. The ring, 5. Birth control pill,
6. Female condom, 7. Urine test, 8. The shot,
9. The patch, 10. Male urethra swab, 11. Male condom,
12. Female cervical/vaginal swab, 13. Dental dam



MATCHING GAME!

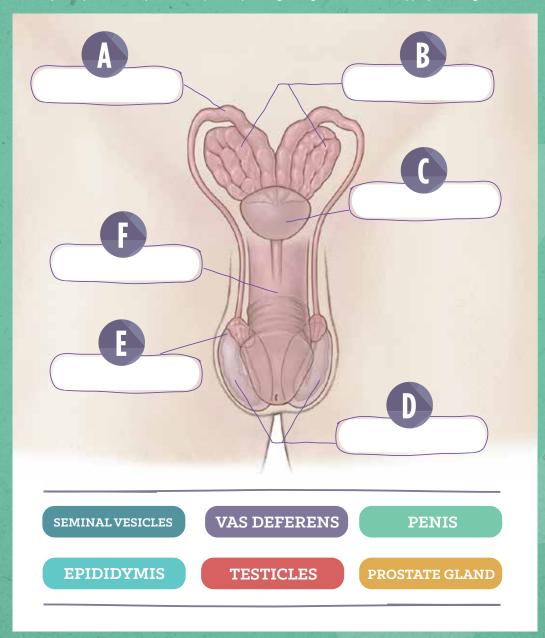
Identify each part of the reproductive system by writing the right words into the appropriate diagram boxes.



Correct answers: A. Fallopian tubes, B. Ovaries, C. Uterus, D. Vagina, E. Cervix

MATCHING GAME!

Identify each part of the reproductive system by writing the right words into the appropriate diagram boxes.



Correct answers: A. Vas deferens, B. Seminal vesicles, C. Prostate gland, D. Testicles, E. Epididymis, F. Penis





CONNECT THE DOTS!

Identify the correct birth control usage frequency by tracing a line between the different types and the appropriate time period.



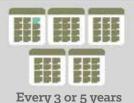
Frequency



Pill















Every 3 months









Daily









Once a week









Once a month

Cottect answets: A. 3., B. 4., C. 5., D. 2., E. 1.

CHECK THE RIGHT BOXES!

For each STI on the list, use checkmarks to identify what type of infection it is and whether or not it is curable.

	Fungal	Bacterial	Viral	Parasitic	Curable	Not curable
1. Human Papillomavirus (HPV)						
2. Trichomoniasis (Trich)						
3. Genital Herpes (HSV)						
4. Pubic Lice (Crabs)						
5. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV-AIDS)						
6. Syphilis (The Great Imitator)						
7. Scabies (Mites)						
8. Yeast Infection (Candida)						
g. Gonorrhea (The Clap)						
10. Hepatitis B (Hep B)						
11. Chlamydia (LGV)						

Correct answers: 1. Viral / Not curable, 2. Parasitic / Curable, 3. Viral / Not curable, 4. Parasitic / Curable, 5. Viral / Not curable, 1. Bacterial / Curable, 7. Parasitic / Curable, 1. Bacterial / Curable, 7. Parasitic / Curable, 1. Bacterial / Curable, 7. Parasitic / Curable, 8. Fungal / Curable, 9. Bacterial / Curable, 10. Viral / Not curable, 11. Bacterial / Curable



