LESBIANS & OTHER WOMEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH WOMEN

While the risk of transmitting HIV sexually from woman to woman is extremely low, there are other considerations lesbians and other women who have sex with women should take into account regarding Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). If you are sexually active outside of a mutually monogamous relationship, we recommend testing for HIV and other STDs every six months. An honest conversation with your medical provider can help ensure adequate testing and treatment.

Barriers & Condoms
Dental dams and plastic kitchen wrap can be used to prevent the transmission of STDs from giving and/or receiving oral sex. To reduce your risk for contracting HIV, HPV (cell dysplasia), chlamydia and gonorrhea, it is important to change condoms or clean toys in between partners.

Cleaning Toys
*Bleach solution: Ten parts water to one part bleach

Oral/Anal Gonorrhea & Chlamydia
If you give oral sex or share toys, urinating in a cup is not enough to determine if you have an STD. You could have gonorrhea or chlamydia in your throat or anus. For this reason, you should also have a throat culture and an anal swab. While both of these STDs can be treated if you have a pharyngeal (throat) or anal STD, treatment for infection at one site will not necessarily treat the other. A higher dose of medication may be required than for a vaginal/cervical STD. It is recommended that treatment be given by injection instead of pill form to cure pharyngeal and anal infections of gonorrhea.

Hepatitis A, B & C
Hepatitis A can be transmitted through infected fecal matter from anal-oral contact including oral contact with toys which have come into contact with fecal matter.
Hepatitis B can be transmitted though infected vaginal secretions or blood entering your body though mouth, vagina or anus.
Hepatitis C can be transmitted by giving oral sex during the menstrual cycle.

STDs Transmitted Through Skin to Skin Contact
Syphilis, HPV and Herpes can be transmitted by performing and receiving oral sex, and from vulva to vulva contact (tribadism/tribbing/scissoring).

Yeast Infection, Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) and Trichomoniasis
Women can transmit yeast infections, bacterial vaginosis and trichomoniasis by sharing toys without cleaning or changing condoms between partners, and from the exchange of vaginal fluids through vulva to vulva contact (tribadism/tribbing/scissoring) or digital (finger) penetration.

Vaccinations
Vaccines for some types of HPV are available. A combination vaccine series for Hepatitis A & B can prevent a person from contracting both viruses even when exposed.

For referrals to convenient STD testing & Hepatitis vaccination sites, call the State of Illinois AIDS/HIV & STD Hotline anonymously at:

1.800.AID.AIDS | 1.800.243.2437 | 8AM – 10PM DAILY | SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

STATE OF ILLINOIS AIDS/HIV & STD HOTLINE
HIV TESTING & PREVENTION PROGRAM
1.800.AID.AIDS (1.800.243.2437)
773.661.0910

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Transmission of STDs occurs only if your partner has the disease. Proper use of condoms protects against fluid-transmitted STDs like Gonorrhea, Chlamydia, Trichomoniasis, and Hepatitis. They are slightly less effective for skin to skin contact diseases like Syphilis, Genital Human Papillomavirus (HPV), and Herpes. With all STDs, it’s possible for symptoms to go unrecognized or not appear at all. Regular STD testing is recommended for all sexually active people.

**SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES: QUICK FACTS**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Transmission</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Long Term</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syphilis</td>
<td>oral, anal, and vaginal sex. direct skin to skin contact with chancre</td>
<td>primary: painless chancre on genitals, mouth, or rectum; secondary: rash on hands/feet</td>
<td>brain damage, nerve damage, can be fatal</td>
<td>curable with antibiotics, but long-term damage can be irreversible if left untreated</td>
<td>swab test of sore, blood test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonorrhea</td>
<td>unprotected oral, anal, and vaginal sex</td>
<td>burning urination, discharge, sore throat (through oral sex)</td>
<td>damage of urethra and urinary tract, sterility, throat damage if contracted from giving oral</td>
<td>curable with antibiotics (injection may be needed for throat/rectal infection)</td>
<td>urine test and/or swab test of penis, throat, anus, or vagina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlamydia</td>
<td>unprotected vaginal sex</td>
<td>burning urination, discharge</td>
<td>damage of urethra and urinary tract, sterility</td>
<td>curable with antibiotics</td>
<td>urine test and/or swab test of penis or vagina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trich</td>
<td>skin to skin genital contact with infected area</td>
<td>genital warts; abnormal cellular changes</td>
<td>abnormal cellular changes may progress to genital cancers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genital HPV</td>
<td>oral, anal, vaginal sex or kissing, skin to skin contact with herpes sores or cells</td>
<td>blisters on genitals, thighs, buttocks, or mouth</td>
<td>individuals vary, many continue to have regular outbreaks</td>
<td>no cure, but suppressive medications can reduce severity and number of outbreaks</td>
<td>visual, culture from sore, or blood test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herpes</td>
<td>unprotected oral, anal, and vaginal sex or blood contact</td>
<td>may occur an average of 12 weeks after exposure</td>
<td>about 10% of infected adults become chronic</td>
<td>.bedrest; once you’ve had it, you won’t get it again; a vaccine is available</td>
<td>blood test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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