

Reducing sexually transmitted infections

Information for the public

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Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can affect a person's wellbeing, their mental health and their relationships. They can also lead to serious health problems including infertility, ectopic pregnancy and pelvic inflammatory disease. Sexual health services carry out around 1.5 million tests for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis or HIV a year.

We want this guideline to make a difference to people who are sexually active by making sure:

- it is easy for people to access sexual health services in GP, hospital or community venues, as well as online
- people have a choice of where to have an STI test, including having a home-sampling kit
- people at the highest risk of catching HIV know where to get a medicine called PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) to reduce their risk
- people diagnosed with an STI can get help with telling their partners
- men who have sex with men can get the HPV (human papilloma virus) and hepatitis A and B vaccines.

Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your health professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns.

If you need more support to understand the information you are given, tell your healthcare professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Where can I find out more?

The [NHS website](#) has more information about sexually transmitted infections. You can also use this website to find NHS sexual health services near you.

The organisations below can give you more advice and support.

- [Brook](#)
- [Hepatitis B Positive Trust](#), 07958 558510
- [National AIDS Trust](#)
- [Terrence Higgins Trust](#), 0808 802 1221

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

We wrote this guideline with people who have been affected by sexually transmitted infections and staff who treat and support them. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

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