



Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg  
Behörde für Umwelt und Gesundheit

## INFORMATION

# about sexually transmitted diseases



**Gesundheit!**

Fachabteilung  
Gesundheitsberichterstattung und  
Gesundheitsförderung

## **Impressum**

### **Informationen über sexuell übertragbare Erkrankungen**

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Die Behörde für Umwelt und Gesundheit im Internet:  
[www.gesundheit.hamburg.de](http://www.gesundheit.hamburg.de)

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# Why was this BROCHURE written?

1

To inform but not to worry you,

2

to encourage you to talk with your partner and with your doctor,

3

to help find the best contact at the right time,

4

as a guide for both men and women on how to protect themselves.

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# What are sexually transmitted diseases (STD)?

Sexually Transmitted Diseases = (STD) is the name for all diseases that can be passed on by sex. Transmitting a disease can also occur during pregnancy and when giving birth. STD caused by bacteria can be treated with antibiotics and are curable. STD caused by viruses are treated symptomatically - some heal on their own while others can only be prevented by vaccination. Sexual contact must be avoided during treatment. In order to avoid long-term damage (for example, sterility by men and women), it is necessary to be examined and treated on the first sign of an illness.

First, get in touch with a doctor at the advisory centers for sexually transmitted diseases at your health center or go to a skin specialist, that is, a dermatologist.

**Using condoms can prevent STD and AIDS.**

**When properly used condoms can prevent unwanted pregnancies.**

# Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD)

## 1 Clap (Gonorrhoea)

- Cause: bacteria
- Transmitted by sexual contact.

### Signs of discomfort

**Men:** Usually 2-7 days after contact burning and itching when passing water or a discharge of fluid from penis.

**Women:** Occasional burning and itching when passing water; more than usual discharge of fluid from the vagina.

**Attention!** Women do not always have as noticeable symptoms as

men - in fact, sometimes they hardly have any at all - and often mistake them for something else. Another important reason for men to inform their partner of their illness.

Treatment: With antibiotics at earliest sign.  
Note: A medical examination of the partner is required.

## 2 Syphilis (Lues)

- Cause: bacteria
- Transmission primarily by sexual contact.

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Signs of discomfort

Men/women: First symptoms for male and female appear after 3-4 weeks. A small sore appears where contact occurred (sexual organ, anus, mouth) which does not hurt and disappears without a trace. If not treated, a non-itching skin rash appears after 4 to 8 weeks which disappears on its own. Without treatment, the disease worsens.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Attention! | The symptoms described are often not recognized - if uncertain that you have contacted the disease, a blood test 4 to 6 weeks after questionable contact is advisable. |
| Treatment: | Antibiotics can completely cure syphilis.  |
| Note:      | A medical examination of the partner is required.  |

### 3 Chlamydia

- Cause: bacteria
- Most common sexually transmitted disease.
- Infection by sexual contact.

#### Signs of discomfort

Men/women: For both male and female, there are no or very few noticeable symptoms for long periods of time, which is the reason this disease often goes undetected. Symptoms are discharge of fluids as well as unpleasant feelings or pain during or following sex.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Attention! | Otherwise the symptoms are similar to gonorrhoea. Without treatment, long-term damage can occur. |
| Treatment: | Antibiotics.   |
| Note:      | A medical examination of the partner is required.  |

## 4 Trichomoniasis

- Causative agent is a single-celled organism
- Transmission mostly through sexual contact; less frequent by indirect contact (bathhouses, whirlpools).

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### Signs of discomfort

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Women:     | Itching of the vagina and discharge of fluids.  |
| Men:       | Seldom complaints at all, although itching is occasionally mentioned and discharge of fluids is also sometimes mentioned. |
| Treatment: | Antibiotics.  |
| Note:      | A medical examination of the partner is required.   |

## 5 Condyloma (Genital Warts)

- Causative agent is a virus.
- It can take a long time before the disease is visible.
- Infection by sexual contact.

### Signs of discomfort

Men/women: Warts that aren't painful appear on penis, vagina and anus.

Treatment: There are various local treatment methods. Medical follow-up checks over a long period are important to prevent a relapse. The fewer warts, the easier it is to treat them.

Note: A medical examination of the partner is required.

## 6 Herpes simplex genitalis

- Causative agent is a virus.
- Initial infection by sexual contact.
- Fluid-containing vesicles (boils) can reappear without renewed contact.
- Infection occurs primarily through contact with contagious fluid from sores.

## Signs of discomfort

Men/women: Itching, pains and boils near sexual organs, anus or mouth. The boils break open, begin to clear up and heal over again.

Treatment: Salves and/or pills.

Attention! Re-infection of oneself can occur.

## 7

# Hepatitis (inflammation of the liver)

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- Causative agent is a virus.
- The following list of variations A, B and C of this contagious diseases differ strongly in the way they are transmitted.
- Infection is seldom noticed.

## Hepatitis A

- Causative agent is spread through contact with excrement.
- Infection occurs if it enters your mouth, for example, through oral sex.

### Signs of discomfort:

Men/women: Nausea, vomiting, fever, feeling of exhaustion, possible yellow coloration of eyes and skin.

Treatment: Not treatable with medicine.

Prevention: Heals on its own. Bed rest, relaxing, and taking things easy, as well as nutritious meals without alcohol are necessary. Washing hands regularly after having used the toilet. Vaccination.

## Hepatitis B

- Infection occurs primarily through blood, sperm and vaginal fluids.
- Several months can pass before disease breaks out.
- It's not curable in all cases and sometimes becomes chronic.

### Signs of discomfort

Men/women: Muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, tiredness, sometimes darkened urine and a light-colored bowel movement, yellow skin and the whites of the eyes have turned yellow.

**Treatment:** Bed rest, relaxing, and taking things easy, as well as nutritious meals. Interferon can be used to treat a chronic course of the disease.

**Prevention:** Vaccination.

**Attention!** Sexual partners of (chronically ill) carriers of viruses are susceptible to contacting the disease! Vaccination is highly recommended.

## Hepatitis C

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- Transmission often occurs through blood.
- Possible when being tattooed, pierced or similar procedures.
- There are still some unknowns about how it is spread; sexual contact has not been eliminated as a way of infection.

Signs of discomfort

Men/women: None to speak of.

How is it

determined: A blood test is given.

**Treatment:** Interferon can be used to treat a chronic course of the disease.

Attention! 70-80% of the disease are chronic. There is still no vaccination available.

## 8 Fungal infections of the sexual organs

- Causative agent is a fungal infection.
- Infections only rarely occur through sexual contact.
- An acidic imbalance often causes fungal infections in the mucous membrane of sexual organs.
- This imbalance is often caused by other illnesses, hormonal adjustments or medication.
- Occurs more often by women than men.

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### Signs of discomfort

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Men:       | Itching, burning sensation and reddening of testicles and foreskin.                          |
| Women:     | Itching, burning sensation in and on the lips of the vagina, as well as discharge of fluid.  |
| Treatment: | Determining the cause and treating locally with topical ointments and vaginal suppositories. |

# HIV/AIDS

- A viral disease

**Transmission:** By sperm, blood (also menstrual blood), vaginal fluids as well as breast feeding.

**Infection:** Occurs only when bodily fluids enter open wounds or through the mucous membrane and pass into another person's blood circulation.

**Prevention:** Proper use of condoms and sterilized needles.

**How is it determined:** HIV antibody test.

**Attention!** Although no cure has been found, the outcome of the disease can be improved with antiviral drugs.

**Further information and help is available at AIDS advisory centers.**

## IV.

# Condoms/lubricants

**Condoms can prevent you from infection when having sex.**

Use only high-quality condoms with seal of approval and expiration dates - store at room temperature.

**Where can you get condoms?**

Regardless whether you are a man or a woman, you can purchase condoms in pharmacies, drugstores, department stores, grocery stores and gas stations.

**Some tips about using condoms:**

Because they are very thin, they are easily torn. Whether you are a man or a woman, be careful not to damage them, for example, on sharp fingernails or on rings.

Lubricants facilitate the use of condoms. Pay attention that you purchase water-soluble condoms, which are available in pharmacies. Lubricants made of an oil base, for example Vaseline, may damage the condom and make it porous.

V.

## Addresses

### **ZENTRALE BERATUNGSSTELLE ALTONA**

Max-Brauer-Allee 152 · 22765 Hamburg  
Phone: 428 11 - 21 94 · Fax: 428 11 - 1644  
S-Bahn Holstenstraße or S-Bahn Altona,  
Bus 115 to Max-Brauer-Allee Mitte

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### **OFFICE HOURS**

|           |                |
|-----------|----------------|
| Monday    | 12.00 to 16.00 |
| Tuesday   | 8.00 to 14.00  |
| Wednesday | 11.00 to 16.00 |
| Thursday  | 11.00 to 16.00 |

and by appointment

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