

# DO I HAVE AN

# STI?

Are you worried that you could have an STI? Find out what STIs are, the different causes and what signs to look out for.

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## What are STIs?

An STI is an infection which is caused by bacteria, viruses or parasites. You don't need to have lots of sexual partners to get an infection. They're really common, and a lot of people have them or have had them in the past.

**In South Africa, STIs are more common than you might think.**

In 2017 among adults, 6% of women and 4% of men had gonorrhoea, while 15% of women and 6% of men had chlamydia.

## Did you know?

STIs are passed on through sexual contact. You can catch one if you have condomless vaginal, anal or oral sex, by genital contact and through sharing sex toys.



Some STIs are carried in body fluids like semen (cum), vaginal fluids, and blood. Others can be passed just from skin-to-skin touching with an infected body area.

## Eish!

Without treatment, STIs can lead to serious health problems including difficulty having children, cervical cancer or bad infections that spread to other parts of your body.

There are many types of STIs, but they are not always easy to spot because you may be asymptomatic (not showing any symptoms).

**You can also have more than one at a time!**

## Condomise!

Using condoms can help you avoid contact with bodily fluids and some types of skin-to-skin contact during sex. So, when you don't use condoms, your chance of getting an STI goes up.

**Condoms are the only way to prevent all STIs including HIV. Learn about male and female condoms and how to put them on:**



## Worried you might have an STI?

There are many types of STIs, but they are not always easy to spot because you may be asymptomatic (not showing any symptoms). You can also have more than one at a time! **If you have an STI, it may cause:**

A sore on your genitals.

A growth on your genitals.

A discharge from your penis or vagina.

Burning or itching or redness of the skin on and around your genitals.

Stomach pain in the bottom half of your tummy.

**Got questions? Connect with us here:**

@B Wise Health | @MyPrePSouthAfrica

myprep.southafrica | 065 869 8031

## No stress!

If you're worried you might have an STI, go to your clinic or speak to your closest healthcare provider.

**Don't delay!**

And you can scan this code to learn more about how to protect yourself from STIs - no stress, this code will take you to [www.bwisehealth.com](http://www.bwisehealth.com) and it won't use your mobile data!



## What's the deal with STI treatment?

If you have an STI, you will need treatment. The right treatment will depend on the type of STI you have. Treatment might include antibiotics or medicines called antivirals, which fight viruses. Treatment can cure your infection or keep it from getting worse. It can also reduce the chance that you spread your infection to others.

**Once you start antibiotic treatment, it's important you finish it.**

## Important stuff

It's also important to abstain from sex until seven days after you've completed antibiotic treatment and any sores have healed. If your symptoms don't get better after the antibiotics or get better and then worse again please go back to your clinic.

If you think you might have an STI and want to find out more about how to tell your partner, follow this link



**STIs should not interrupt your life!**

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For all the information, care and advice about STIs and how to prevent and treat them, connect to [www.bwisehealth.com](http://www.bwisehealth.com)

# Contraceptives

Learn what contraceptives are, how they work, the different types and how they prevent pregnancy.



You can get contraceptives for free at your local public clinic or hospital if you are 12 years and older. You won't need your parents' permission. The healthcare providers will help you choose the best method for you.

## Contraception: What is it?

Contraception prevents pregnancy once you start having sex. Other words for contraception are family planning or birth control. There are different methods that both men and women can use.



## Dual protection

All contraceptive methods protect you from unplanned pregnancy. But only condoms can protect you from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV. This is why it is a good idea to always use a condom and another contraceptive method.



**Using two forms of protection is the way to go if you want to stay healthy and safe!**

## What is a male/external condom?

A male/external condom is a thin, single-use rubber that unrolls and completely covers the penis. Condoms can be used for vaginal or anal sex and they are the only prevention method that will protect you from pregnancy AND protect you from HIV or other STIs.

**You can use condoms in combination with all other types of contraceptives. You can also use condoms with HIV prevention methods like PrEP.**



## What are female/internal condoms?

A female condom is a thin, single-use, soft pouch which fits inside the vagina or anus. It has a ring on each end, which helps with inserting it into the vagina or anus. Female condoms can be used for vaginal or anal sex and they are the only prevention method that will protect you from pregnancy AND from HIV or other STIs. There is also a male/external condom. When used correctly, the female condom has a high chance of preventing pregnancy.

## The pill

The oral contraceptive (better known as "the pill") is a small pill that contains hormones. You take it once a day, at the same time everyday, whether or not you have sex.

**When used correctly, the pill has a high chance of preventing pregnancy.**

**There are two types of pills:**

- The combined pill that contains the hormones oestrogen and progestin.
- The progestin-only pill that only contains the hormone progestin.

## The injection

The injection is a long-lasting and reversible contraceptive that prevents pregnancy. The injection contains a hormone called progestin.

**When used correctly, the injection has a high chance of preventing pregnancy. The injection does not prevent STIs and HIV, but a male/external or female/internal condom can.**

You need to get your injection every two or three months depending on the type of injection you receive from the clinic or hospital.

## The implant

The implant is a plastic rod that is the size of a matchstick. It is inserted just below the skin of the upper arm. When used correctly, the implant has a very high chance of preventing pregnancy.

The implant constantly releases hormones in small doses into the bloodstream. The hormones keep your ovaries from releasing eggs but also thickens the walls of your cervix making it hard for sperm to move. The cervix is the opening into the womb.

## The non-hormonal IUD

The non-hormonal IUD (also known as the Copper IUD) is a small, long-lasting T-shaped device that is inserted into the womb by a healthcare provider to prevent pregnancy. It does not contain hormones and is made of plastic and copper. The copper is released in safe amounts into the womb.

**When used correctly, this IUD has a very high chance of preventing pregnancy.**

## Emergency contraception

Emergency contraception is contraception that can be taken when **AFTER** you have had unprotected sex. You need to take the medicine within 5 days of having unprotected sex, the sooner the better.

There are two types of emergency contraception: The **emergency contraception pill** (also known as the morning-after pill) and the **IUD**. Both can prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex if used within 5 days, but the sooner the better.

For more info on any of the above methods and how they work, scan this code:



Photo source: Project PrEP, WitsRHI - Unitaid; Appearance in a photograph in this material does not indicate a person's health status.

