

Safe Sex

Safe sex is about:

- reducing the spread of sexually transmissible infections (STIs)
- avoiding unintended pregnancies
- staying emotionally healthy.

The most common STIs in Australia are chlamydia, genital herpes, genital warts, trichomoniasis, gonorrhoea, Hepatitis B, syphilis and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

STIs can be passed to sexual partners through:

- vaginal sex
- oral sex
- anal sex
- close sexual contact.

Some STIs can be passed from mother to her child during pregnancy or childbirth. They can also be spread between injecting drug users when sharing needles and/or other injecting drug equipment.

Using condoms (on the penis) reduces the risk of passing on STIs during sexual intercourse and oral sex.

Sometimes people with an STI have no symptoms. They might not be aware they have been infected and can pass on the STI during unprotected sexual intercourse and/or oral sex.

Condoms are the only form of contraception that protects against the spread of STIs. If you would like additional information on how to keep yourself safe you can talk with your doctor, [Family Planning Queensland](http://www.fpq.com.au/) (<http://www.fpq.com.au/>) or a [sexual health clinic](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/sex-health/services/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/sex-health/services/default.asp>).

Tips

- Condoms should be used when engaging in vaginal, anal or oral sex.
- It is advisable not to have sexual intercourse, if your sexual partner has a visible sore, ulcer or lumps on the genitals or anal area.
- Some STIs can be passed to the lips, mouth and/or throat during oral sex. It is advisable to use condoms or dental dams for oral sex involving the vulvae or anal areas.
- Drinking alcohol and taking other drugs may affect a person's ability to make healthy choices. It is advisable not to engage in sexual activity, if you are not in full control of the situation.
- Using condoms is the safest method of contraception against the spread of STIs.
- Using sex toys also carries possible transmission risks. Where appropriate, condoms should be used in conjunction with these devices.

Other resources:

- [Queensland sexual health](https://www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy/sexual-health/index.html) (<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy/sexual-health/index.html>)

Help and assistance:

For more information on safe sex, you can talk to a:

- doctor
- [sexual health clinic](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/sex-health/services/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/sex-health/services/default.asp>)
- [family planning clinic](http://www.fpq.com.au/) (<http://www.fpq.com.au/>).