

STD 101 In A Box- STD Glossary of Terms

Abstinence	Not having sexual intercourse
Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)	A disease of the human immune system caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). HIV/AIDS represents the entire range of disease caused by the HIV virus from early infection to late stage symptoms.
Anal Intercourse	Sexual contact in which the penis enters the anus.
Antibiotic	A medication that either kills or inhibits the growth of a bacteria.
Antiviral	A medication that either kills or inhibits the growth of a virus.
Atrophic	A thinning of tissue modified by the location. In epidermal atrophy, the epidermis becomes transparent with a loss of skin texture and cigarette paper-like wrinkling. In dermal atrophy, there is a loss of connective tissue and the lesion is depressed.
Bacterial Vaginosis (BV)	A polymicrobial clinical syndrome resulting from replacement of the normal hydrogen peroxide producing <i>Lactobacillus sp.</i> in the vagina with high concentrations of anaerobic bacteria. The common symptom of BV is abnormal homogeneous, off-white, fishy smelling vaginal discharge.
Cervical Motion Tenderness (CMT)	A sign found on pelvic examination suggestive of pelvic pathology; when movement of the cervix during the bimanual exam elicits pain.
Cervix	The lower, cylindrical end of the uterus that forms a narrow canal connecting the upper (uterus) and lower (vagina) parts of a woman's reproductive tract.
Chlamydia	The most common sexually transmitted bacterial infection in the U.S., caused by the bacteria <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i> . Often no symptoms are present, especially in women. Untreated chlamydia can cause sterility, Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID), and increase the chances for life-threatening tubal pregnancies. Chlamydia is treated with antibiotics and can be prevented by avoiding sexual intercourse or by using a latex or polyurethane condom with every sex act.
Condom (male)	A device which covers the penis, worn during sex to prevent STDs and pregnancy. Condoms can be made of animal skin, latex, or polyurethane, but only latex and polyurethane condoms protect against diseases.
Condom (female)	A device worn internally that lines the vagina during sexual intercourse as barrier contraceptive to prevent exposure to ejaculated sperm and STDs. The female condom is a thin, soft, loose-fitting sheath with a flexible ring at each end made out of polyurethane or synthetic nitrile.

Confidential	Private information that identifies a person and by law, is required to be kept in a secured location with access restricted only to authorized personnel. For example, a confidential HIV test would be one where a person's file would be kept in a locked file where only authorized medical personnel (doctor or counselor) would have access without written patient consent.
Cryotherapy	Freezing with liquid nitrogen or cryoprobe, one of the recommended provider-administered treatments for external genital warts.
Dark Field	A simple and reliable microscopic test for the direct detection of <i>Treponema pallidum</i> , the bacteria that causes syphilis. Exudates and fluids from genital lesions are examined as a wet mount using dark-field microscopy. Dark field microscopy is most suitable when the lesions are located in the genital region, moist and the examination can be done immediately after specimen collection. Non-genital lesions, especially oral lesions, can result in false positives due to the presence of non-pathogenic spirochetes and is not recommended.
Dental Dam	A thin, rectangular sheet, usually latex rubber, used as a barrier to prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted infections during oral sex.
Disease Intervention Specialist (DIS)	A public health worker that investigates cases and contacts of reportable sexually transmitted diseases. The DIS locates and counsels people with STDs and HIV to identify exposed individuals and ensure testing and treatment. DIS provides recommendations to physicians and health departments on the testing and treatment of patients, and facilitate rapid referrals to service and follow-up.
Dyspareunia	Painful sexual intercourse.
Dysuria	Difficulty or painful urination.
Enzyme-linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA)	A screening test used to detect HIV infection by looking for antibodies to the virus in a patient's serum. If antibodies to HIV are present (positive), the test is usually repeated to confirm the first result. After two positive tests, a third confirmatory test is performed to confirm exposure to HIV.
Ectopic Pregnancy	Also referred to as "Tubal Pregnancy" - a pregnancy in which the fertilized egg that grows into the fetus attaches itself to the fallopian tube instead of the walls of the uterus. Ectopic pregnancy can be life-threatening. Rates of ectopic pregnancy increase significantly in women who have PID, an effect of untreated bacterial STDs such as chlamydia and gonorrhea.
Edematous	A condition marked by an excessive accumulation of watery fluid in cells and tissues.

<p>Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT)</p>	<p>Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) is the clinical practice of treating the sex partners of patients diagnosed with chlamydia or gonorrhea by providing prescriptions or medications to the patient to take to his/her partner without the health care provider first examining the partners. Legality varies by state but is allowed by the majority of states in the US.</p>
<p>Fallopian Tubes</p>	<p>Tubes on each side of the uterus through which an egg moves from the ovaries to the uterus.</p>
<p>Fluorescent Treponemal Antibody test (FTA)</p>	<p>A blood serum test for syphilis which detects the presence or absence of specific antibodies directed against the organism <i>Treponema pallidum</i>. The FTA is a "treponemal test" used in the diagnosis of syphilis infection and detects the majority but not all cases of infection. False negatives can occur in early syphilis infection and false positives are relatively uncommon. The FTA should be used in conjunction with the RPR to properly diagnose syphilis infection.</p>
<p>Genital Warts</p>	<p>A viral infection caused by the nononcogenic or low-risk types of HPV (Human Papillomavirus), usually types 6 and 11. Genital warts are diagnosed by visual inspection, and most commonly occur in the genital or anal areas of the body. They typically appear cauliflower-shaped, and can be flesh-colored, pink, or hyperpigmented. Because genital warts are caused by a virus, there is no real cure – the warts themselves can be treated, but the virus still lives inside a person's body. HPV is passed through direct skin-to-skin contact, even if no symptoms are present.</p>
<p>Gonorrhea</p>	<p>The second most commonly reported bacterial STD in the U.S., caused by the bacteria <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i>. Many people who are infected show no signs of the disease, particularly women. When symptoms are present, they usually appear 2 to 5 days after sex with an infected partner. Gonorrhea can cause PID if left untreated. Gonorrhea is treated with antibiotics and can be prevented by avoiding sexual intercourse or by using a latex or polyurethane condom with every sex act.</p>
<p>Gynecologist</p>	<p>A doctor who specializes in women's reproductive health.</p>
<p>Hepatitis A Virus (HAV)</p>	<p>An acute viral infection of the liver caused by the Hepatitis A virus (HAV). Often asymptomatic and generally self-limiting. Symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, yellow skin, fever and abdominal pain. Incubation period is 2-6 weeks. Rarely results in chronic infection, chronic liver disease or acute liver failure. Transmission is primarily by the fecal-oral route via food or water contaminated with feces. The Hepatitis A vaccine is available for the prevention of Hepatitis A.</p>

<p>Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)</p>	<p>An infectious illness of the liver caused by the Hepatitis B virus (HBV). Acute illness causes liver inflammation, vomiting, jaundice and, rarely, death. Chronic Hepatitis B may eventually cause cirrhosis and liver cancer. Transmitted by exposure to infectious blood or body fluids such as semen and vaginal fluid. Disease has a poor response to all but a few current therapies and is preventable by the Hepatitis B vaccine.</p>
<p>Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)</p>	<p>An infectious disease affecting primarily the liver caused by the Hepatitis C virus (HCV). Infection is often asymptomatic, but chronic infection can lead to scarring of the liver and ultimately to cirrhosis. Those with cirrhosis may go on to develop liver failure or liver cancer. Transmission occurs through blood-to-blood contact associated with intravenous blood use, poorly sterilized medical equipment, transfusions and rarely through sexual transmission. Chronic infection can be treated with medication and cure rates range from 50-80%. HCV is the leading reason for liver transplantation. No vaccine against Hepatitis C is available.</p>
<p>Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)</p>	<p>A lentivirus (a subgroup of retrovirus) that causes the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), a condition in which progressive failure of the immune system allows life-threatening opportunistic infections and cancers to thrive. HIV is transmitted via blood, semen, vaginal fluid, pre-ejaculate and breast milk. The virus infects vital cells in the human immune system such as helper T cells, macrophages and dendritic cells, leading to a loss of cell-mediated immunity. As a result, the body becomes progressively susceptible to opportunistic infections. HIV is highly treatable but there is no cure or vaccine for prevention.</p>
<p>Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)</p>	<p>A DNA virus from the papillomavirus family that establishes infection in keratinocytes of the skin and mucous membranes. Most HPV infections are subclinical and will cause no physical symptoms however some subclinical infections may become clinical and cause benign papillomas (warts) or squamous cell papillomas (cancers). 30-40 types of HPV are typically transmitted through sexual contact and infect the anogenital region. HPV types 6 and 11 are mostly commonly associated with genital warts and rarely progress to cancer. "High-risk" HPV types 16 and 18 are associated with progression to precancerous lesions and invasive cancer. The HPV vaccine can prevent most types of HPV infection and is recommended for both males and females at 11-12 years of age.</p>

Herpes simplex virus (HSV)	A chronic, life-long viral infection spread when an infected person is producing and shedding the virus in an infected area of the skin. Two types of HSV have been identified, HSV-1 and HSV-2. Most cases of genital herpes are caused by HSV-2 and oral lesions caused by HSV-1 but both types can be found in the genital area. A large majority of individuals with the herpes virus are asymptomatic and unaware of their exposure. The infection is manageable and treatable with antiviral therapy but there is no vaccine for prevention.
Injection Drug Use (IDU)	A term used to describe a person who injects drugs using a needle.
Long-Acting Bicillin (LAB)	The antibiotic recommended for the treatment of syphilis due to its prolonged, low concentration, antibacterial action over 2-4 weeks after a single intramuscular dose. Also known as benzathine penicillin.
Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure (LEEP)	A procedure using a fine, wire loop diathermy for biopsy or excision for treatment of cervical intraepithelial neoplasia (CIN) of the cervix.
Lymphogranuloma Venereum (LGV)	A sexually transmitted disease caused by certain sub-types of <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i> , specifically serovars L1, L2, L2a, and L3. LGV is primarily an infection of lymphatics and lymph nodes and rarely seen in the U.S.
Macerated	Softened or broken down skin resulting from prolonged exposure to wetness that results in whitening and thickening of the keratin, sometimes with redness, oozing, and/or scaling.
Macule	A circumscribed flat discoloration. Examples: a freckle or small vitiligo spot
Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM)	A term used to describe a male who has sex with men. The CDC now recommends: gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (collectively referred to as MSM).
Men Who Have Sex With Women (MSW)	A term used to describe a male who has sex with women.
Mucoid	An adjective used to describe secretions that are slippery and rich in glycoproteins and water.
Mucopurulent Cervicitis (MPC)	Inflammation of the cervix characterized by purulent or mucopurulent endocervical exudate visible in the endocervical canal or on an endocervical swab specimen.
Nodule	A circumscribed, elevated solid lesion. A large nodule is a tumor (i.e. wart, hemangioma).

Non-Gonococcal Urethritis (NGU)	An inflammation of the urethra not caused by gonorrheal infection, characterized by urethral discharge, painful urination, or itching at the end of the urethra.
Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (NAAT)	A molecular technique used to detect a virus or bacterium by detecting the genetic material of an infecting organism. NAAT tests are able to detect presence of infection earlier after exposure than antigen or antibody tests.
Oral Intercourse	Sex in which the mouth comes in contact with the genital areas (penis or vagina).
Ovary	The pair of female reproductive glands in which the ova, or eggs, are formed. The ovaries are located in the lower abdomen, one on each side of the uterus.
Pap Smear	A method of cervical screening used to detect potentially pre-cancerous and cancerous cells in the endocervical canal. A speculum is used to open the vaginal canal and allow the collection of cells from the outer opening of the cervix and the endocervix. Cells are then examined for abnormalities.
Papule	A small superficial bump that is elevated and less than 1 cm (i.e. papular dermatitis).
Partner Notification	A process in which a person with an infection, such as an STD, lets his or her sexual partner(s) know about the infection so that testing and treatment can be sought. Disease Investigation Specialists (DIS) in health departments can assist with the notification process.
Patch	A large macule equal to or greater than 1 centimeter (cm) across, commonly involving some type of subtle skin surface changes, such as scaling or wrinkling, though the lesion itself is not palpable.
Patient Delivered Partner Therapy (PDPT)	A form of EPT (Expedited Partner Therapy), in which providers provide infected patients with treatment packets to deliver to their partners without requiring the partners to come into clinic for a medical exam or testing.
Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)	An inflammatory disorder of the upper female genital tract, including any combination of endometritis, salpingitis, tubo-ovarian abscess and pelvic peritonitis. The infection (usually caused by sexually transmitted organisms) spreads from the vagina to the upper parts of a woman's reproductive tract in the pelvic cavity. It can be difficult to diagnose because of the wide variety of symptoms and signs, which can be mild and subtle in many women. If left untreated, PID can cause infertility and severe cases may even spread to the liver and kidneys, causing dangerous internal bleeding, lung failure, and death.

Pelvis	The lower part of the abdomen between the hip bones. Organs in a female's pelvis include the uterus, vagina, ovaries, fallopian tubes, bladder, and rectum.
Plaque	A broad papule, or confluence of papules equal to or greater than 1 cm; an elevated, plateau-like lesion greater in its diameter than in its depth (i.e. psoriasis).
Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome/Disease (PCOS/PCOD)	A condition in which a woman's ovaries or adrenal glands produce more male hormones than normal, possibly resulting in the development of cysts (fluid-filled sacs) on the ovaries. Women who are obese are more likely to have PCOS. Women with PCOS are at increased risk of developing diabetes and heart disease.
Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)	A preventative medical treatment started immediately after a high-risk exposure to a pathogen such as HIV to prevent infection and development of the disease. To be effective PEP for HIV must be taken within 72 hours of exposure and consists of 2-3 antiretroviral medications taken for 28 days.
Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)	A preventative medical treatment used before exposure to a disease causing agent to prevent rather than treat or cure a disease. PrEP most commonly refers to an HIV-prevention strategy that uses antiretroviral medications to protect high-risk HIV-negative people from acquiring HIV.
Pruritus	Sensation that causes the desire or reflex to scratch; itchiness.
Pubic Lice	The crab louse (<i>Pthirus pubis</i>), also known as the pubic louse, is a tiny insect that is an obligate ectoparasite of humans. It is typically found in the pubic hair, but may also live on other areas of coarse hair, including the eyelashes. They cannot jump and feed exclusively on blood. They are spread through sexual contact as well as when infested bed sheets, clothing, or towels are shared. Females lay 3 eggs a day and the eggs take 6-8 days to hatch. Itching is the main symptom of pubic lice. Skin may be irritated, and a rash may develop from extensive scratching and digging. Pubic lice can be treated with a medicated shampoo.
Purulent	Producing or containing pus.
Pustule	A small circumscribed elevation on the skin containing pus.

Rapid Plasma Reagin (RPR)	<p>A "macroscopic" serologic test that looks for non-specific antibodies in the blood of a patient that may be infected with <i>Treponema pallidum</i>, the bacteria that causes syphilis. The test does not look for antibodies against the actual organism but rather for antibodies against substances released by cells when they are damaged by <i>T. pallidum</i>. The RPR is used to screen for syphilis and a RPR level (also called a "titer") can be used to track the progress of the disease over time and the patient's response to therapy. Because it is a non-specific test, false positives can be seen due to a variety of different circumstances and conditions. The RPR is the test of choice by most labs across the U.S., and has largely replaced the VDRL, a similar nontreponemal syphilis test.</p>
Reporting	<p>The process of notifying the federal, state, regional, or local authorities of a new case of reportable disease. Individual states have reporting laws on which diseases are required to be reported and who is required to submit the report (lab, clinic or both).</p>
Scabies	<p>A contagious skin infection caused by the mite <i>Sarcoptes scabiei</i>. The mite is tiny and not directly visible. The parasite burrows under the host's skin, causing intense itching. The mite may be transmitted by direct skin-to-skin contact and from infested bed sheets, towels, or clothes. Extensive scratching can also cause a rash. Like pubic lice, scabies can be cured with a medicated shampoo.</p>
Semen	<p>The fluid from a man's penis that contains sperm.</p>
Sensitivity	<p>A statistical measurement of the performance of a test which measures the proportion of actual positives which are correctly identified. The ability of a test to be positive in presence of disease.</p>
Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD)	<p>An infection that is passed during oral, anal, or vaginal sexual contact. Sexually transmitted diseases include chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, genital herpes, HIV, genital warts, and trichomonas.</p>
Specificity	<p>A statistical measurement of the performance of a test which measures the proportion of negatives which are correctly identified. The ability of a test to be negative in absence of disease.</p>
Spermatozoa (sperm)	<p>The male reproductive cells. In mammals, they develop in the testicles and are released from the penis. Sperm cannot divide and have a limited life span of 3-5 days within the female genital tract. Sperm joins an ovum (female egg cell) during fertilization to form a zygote, and contributes half of the nuclear genetic information. In mammals, the sex of the offspring is determined by the sperm cell.</p>

Spermicide	An agent that kills spermatozoa (sperm). Spermicide can be found in some condoms. Frequent use of spermicides containing N-9 has been associated with disruption of the genital epithelium, and is therefore not recommended for STD/HIV prevention.
Squamous	Related to or covered with scales
Sterility	The inability to get pregnant, or get someone pregnant; often caused by the effects of untreated bacterial infections such as chlamydia or gonorrhea.
Symptom	Any noticeable change in the body or its functions that indicates disease or infection; a physical sign that disease is present.
Syphilis	A bacterial infection caused by the spirochete <i>Treponema pallidum</i> . The primary route of transmission is through sexual contact but may also be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy or at birth resulting in congenital syphilis. Signs and symptoms vary depending on which of the 4 stages it presents (primary, secondary, latent, and tertiary). Diagnosis is usually made using blood tests. It can be effectively treated with antibiotics, specifically the preferred intramuscular penicillin G.
Transmission	The spread of disease from one person to another.
Trichomoniasis	An infection caused by the single-celled protozoan parasite <i>Trichomonas vaginalis</i> . Also referred to as "trich", it is an infection of the urogenital tract; the most common site of infection is urethra and vagina in women. Symptoms in women can include vaginal discharge, "fishy" odor, burning and itching. Men rarely experience symptoms but can carry and therefore transmit the parasite through intercourse. It can be effectively treated with oral antibiotics.
Ulcer	An open lesion on the surface of the skin or a mucosal surface, caused by superficial loss of tissue, usually with inflammation.
Urethra	The tube in the penis that carries both urine and semen.
Urethritis	Inflammation (swelling) of the urethra. The most common symptom is painful or difficult urination. Urethral discharge is also frequently present. STDs (gonorrhea and chlamydia) often cause urethritis in men.
Urinalysis	A laboratory test in which urine is examined microscopically for normal and abnormal elements to assist in diagnosing infections of the urinary tract.
Uterus	The small, hollow, pear-shaped organ in a woman's pelvis. The organ in which the fetus develops during gestation; also called the "womb".
Vaginal Intercourse	Sexual contact in which the penis is inserted inside the vagina.

Vaginal Fluid	The natural liquids produced inside a woman's vagina. In an infected person, STDs can be passed when vaginal fluids come in contact with the genital area of a woman's sex partner.
Vaginitis	Inflammation (swelling) of the vagina associated with symptoms of vaginal discharge, itching, pain, and irritation or infection of the vulva. The three main causes of vaginitis are bacterial vaginosis (BV), vulvovaginal candidiasis (VVC or "yeast") and trichomoniasis.
Venereal Disease Research Laboratory (VDRL)	A "microscopic" serologic test that looks for non-specific antibodies in the blood of a patient that may be infected with <i>Treponema pallidum</i> , the bacteria that causes syphilis. The test does not look for antibodies against the actual organism but rather antibodies against substances released by cells when they are damaged by <i>T. pallidum</i> . The VDRL is used to screen for syphilis and a VDRL level (also called a "titer") can be used to track the progress of the disease over time and the patient's response to therapy. Because it is a non-specific test, false positives can be seen due to a variety of different circumstances and conditions. The VDRL has largely been replaced by the RPR as the non-treponemal syphilis test of choice by most labs in the U.S.
Vesicle	A small, fluid-filled bubble, usually superficial, and <0.5cm
Vulvovaginal Candidiasis (VVC)	A vaginal infection typically caused by excessive growth of <i>Candida albicans</i> , a fungal species normally present in the vagina in small numbers and usually harmless. VVC is occasionally caused by other <i>Candida</i> species. Symptoms include pruritus, vaginal soreness, dyspareunia, external dysuria, and abnormal vaginal discharge. Treatment is with an antifungal medication, either topical or oral. An estimated 75% of women will have at least one episode of VVC.
Western Blot	A confirmatory test used to detect specific anti-HIV antibodies in a human serum sample using a gel electrophoresis technique. The Western Blot has been the traditional confirmatory test for HIV following two positive ELISA tests.
Wet Prep	A microscopic laboratory procedure used for the diagnosis of vaginal infections, primarily yeast, trich and BV. A sample of vaginal discharge is put in a saline suspension and viewed under the microscope. Reported abnormal findings should include positive or negative for Clue cells (must be 20%), yeast pseudohyphae, motile trichomonads and increased white blood cells (WBCs).
Zygote	A single cell with a complete set of chromosomes that normally develops into an embryo.

Resources	www.cdc.gov/std ; 2010 CDC STD Treatment Guidelines
	www.AIDS.gov
	www.webmd.com
	http://www.stopthinkbesafe.org/stdfacts/glossary.asp
	Dermatologic Nursing Essentials, M.J. Hill, 1998., UBC Dermatology, derm.ubc.org
	Ratman, S. Can J Dis Med Microbiolo. 2005 Jan-Feb; 16(1): 45 - 51. Accessed at http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2095002/ on 6/19/14