STDs

What are STDs?
Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), also called sexually transmitted infections (STIs), are infections that spread by contact with infected skin or bodily fluids, such as secretions or discharge from the vagina, cervix, penis, and anus, as well as blood. Bacterial STDs are curable and are typically treated with antibiotics. Viral STDs are not curable, but the symptoms of the STD can be managed with other prescriptions.

How are STDs Spread?
STDs are typically spread through sexual contact (vaginal, oral or anal) with an infected partner. They can be spread even without penetrative intercourse or known symptoms. A number of STDs, especially those like herpes, syphilis, and human papillomavirus (HPV), spread by direct skin-to-skin contact. As mentioned, symptoms do no have to be present to spread an STD.

Who’s at Risk?
Anyone who engages in sexual activity can be at risk of acquiring an STD. No person is immune to STDs. Even an individual who has had only one sexual partner can contract an STD if their partner was infected. In fact, 1 in 2 (half) of sexually active people will get an STD by age 25. Anyone who has the following types of contact could be at risk of STDs:
• Genital to Genital
• Anal to Genital
• Oral to Genital
• Hand to Genital
• Oral to Anal

How are STDs Spread?
Many STDs are asymptomatic. This means a person can be infected and show no signs of having an infection. An untreated STD can lead to serious health problems, such as Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID). Other symptoms may include:
• Unusual vaginal discharge and bleeding
• Discharge from the penis
• Burning while urinating
• Pain in genital or lower abdominal area
• Pain during intercourse
• Sores, ulcers, bumps, or rashes
• Itching

Common STDs among college-aged students include chlamydia, gonorrhea, human papillomavirus (HPV), herpes, and trichomoniasis.
Although these are the most common STDs among college-aged students, there are a number of other STDs everyone should be aware of including Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), syphilis, and hepatitis B.

What to do if you think you may have an STD:
• Consult a health care provider
• Get tested at OU Health Services; call 325-4441 option 1 for more info
• Refrain from any type of sexual activity until you have been diagnosed and/or treated

Prevention
Abstinence is the only 100% effective way to prevent an STD and/or an unplanned pregnancy. Methods that can be used to decrease the risk of contracting an STD include:
• Using condoms. Remember to use condoms consistently and correctly during every sexual encounter.
• Plan ahead with your partner. Seek agreement on ways you both will practice safer sex.
• Know the proper types of lubricants to use with condoms.
• Know where you can access PrEP or PEP to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV

How are STDs Spread?
OU Health Services Laboratory
620 Elm Avenue
Norman, OK 73019
(405) 325-2404

Cleveland County Health Department
250 NE 12th Ave
Norman, OK 73071
(405) 321-4048

National STD Hotline
1-800-232-4636 (24 hours)

References
www.cdc.gov (Centers for Disease Control)
www.plannedparenthood.org (Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc.)
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<th>Common STDs</th>
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<td>Chlamydia</td>
<td>Often there are no symptoms. Women may experience abnormal vaginal discharge and/or pain and burning upon urination. In men, painful urination, discharge, or itching/burning around the opening of the penis.</td>
<td>Sexual activity; can be transmitted to newborn during vaginal birth.</td>
<td>Antibiotics can cure the infection. Both partners must be treated in order to prevent passing the infection back and forth. Both partners should abstain from sex until the infection is gone.</td>
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<td>Syphilis</td>
<td>Firm, round, small, and painless sore on the genitals, anus, or mouth, or a rash on the body, especially on the palms of the hands or the soles of the feet.</td>
<td>Transmitted through direct contact with a syphilis sore through vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Can be passed to a baby during pregnancy or during vaginal birth.</td>
<td>Antibiotics can cure the infection. Both partners must be treated and avoid sexual contact until the sores are completely healed.</td>
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<td>Gonorrhea</td>
<td>Often, there are no symptoms. In men, a milky-white, yellow or green discharge from the penis, painful urination; women may not have symptoms but can report frequent, painful urination, with a yellow-green discharge from the vagina or urethra.</td>
<td>Sexual activity; oral sex can produce gonorrheal infection of the throat; can be transmitted to the rectal areas of both sexes; can be transmitted to a newborn during vaginal birth.</td>
<td>Antibiotics can cure the infection. Both partners must be treated in order to prevent passing the infection back and forth. Both partners should abstain from sex until the infection is gone.</td>
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<td>Trichomoniasis (Trich)</td>
<td>Often there are no symptoms. Women may notice a frothy, smelly, yellowish-green discharge and/or genital discomfort. Men may have a discharge from the penis, slight burning after urination or ejaculation.</td>
<td>Through vaginal sex</td>
<td>Antibiotics can cure the infection. Both partners must be treated in order to prevent passing the infection back and forth. Both partners should abstain from sex until the infection is gone. It is common for this infection to come back again.</td>
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<td>Human Papillomavirus (HPV, genital warts)</td>
<td>Most people do not have symptoms. Some people may get genital warts. Cancer-causing HPV types do not cause symptoms until the cancer is advanced.</td>
<td>Sexual activity and can also be passed on during skin-to-skin sexual contact. In rare cases, from mother to child in childbirth.</td>
<td>There is no cure for HPV, but in most cases it goes away on its own. Warts can be treated. A vaccine is available to help prevent certain types of HPV.</td>
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<td>Herpes</td>
<td>HSV-1 produces common fever blisters or cold sores around the lips and oral cavity; HSV-2 produces similar blister-like regions in the genital area, swollen lymph glands, muscular aches and pains, and fever.</td>
<td>Direct contact with a person who has an active infection; intimate sexual contact; condoms may provide insufficient protection. HSV-1 can be spread through kissing.</td>
<td>Incurable; some people may have recurrent sores. Medications may reduce the frequency and duration of outbreaks.</td>
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