

THE LOW DOWN ON THE MOST COMMON STDs

	GENITAL HERPES	SYPHILIS	HEPATITIS B VIRUS (HBV)	HIV
WHAT IS IT?	A viral infection of the genital areas. It can also infect the area around the mouth.	An infection caused by bacteria that can spread throughout the body.	A viral infection affecting the liver- HBV can be acute (mild illness lasting for a short time) or chronic (a serious life-long illness).	The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is the virus that causes AIDS.
HOW MANY PEOPLE GET IT IN THE US?	An estimated 1 million new infections each year, with about 45 million people already infected.	About 46,000 new cases reported each year.	An estimated 40,000 new cases each year (most of which are acquired through sex). Up to 1.2 million people are already infected with chronic HBV.	About 56,000 new infections each year, with an estimated 1.1 million people already living with HIV.
SYMPTOMS	Most people have no symptoms. Herpes 1 typically causes cold sores and fever blisters on the mouth; Herpes 2 typically causes genital sores or blisters. But both viruses can cause sores in either area. A herpes outbreak can start as red bumps and then turn into painful blisters or sores. During the first outbreak, it can also lead to flu-like symptoms (like a fever, headaches, and swollen glands).	Symptoms vary based on the course (timing) of infection—beginning with a single, painless sore (called a chancre) on the genitals, anus, or mouth Other symptoms may appear up to 6 months after the first sore has disappeared, including a rash. However, there may be no noticeable symptoms until syphilis has progressed to more serious problems (see below).	Many people don't have any symptoms, especially adults. People may experience tiredness, aches, nausea & vomiting, loss of appetite, darkening of urine, tenderness in the stomach, or yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes (called jaundice). Symptoms of acute HBV may appear 1 to 6 months after exposure. Symptoms of chronic HBV can take up to 30 years to appear, although liver damage can occur silently.	Many people who are infected with HIV do not have any symptoms and feel healthy. Symptoms don't usually develop until a person's immune system has been weakened. The symptoms people experience are usually related to infections and cancers they get due to a weakened immune system. On average it takes about 10 years from initial HIV infection to develop AIDS.
HOW IT'S SPREAD	Through vaginal, oral, or anal sex. It can also be passed through skin-to-skin sexual contact, kissing, and rarely, from mother to child during childbirth.	Through vaginal, oral, or anal sex. It can also be passed through kissing if there is a lesion (sore) on the mouth, and from mother to child during childbirth.	Through vaginal, oral, or anal sex. Also through childbirth if the baby does not get vaccinated against HBV; sharing contaminated needles or razors; or exposure to the blood, bodily fluids (like cum) or saliva of an infected person.	Through vaginal, oral, or anal sex. Also by sharing contaminated needles or drug works; and from mother-to-child during pregnancy or breast-feeding. The chance of getting it through kissing is very low.
TREATMENT	There is no cure for herpes—the virus stays in the body and may cause recurrent outbreaks. Medications can help treat symptoms, reduce the frequency of outbreaks, and reduce the likelihood of spreading it to sex partners.	Antibiotic treatment can cure syphilis if it's caught early, but medication can't undo damage already done. Both partners must be treated and avoid sexual contact until the sores are completely healed.	Most often, acute HBV is treated with rest, eating well, and lots of fluids. Chronic HBV is treated through close monitoring by a doctor and anti-retroviral medications.	There is no cure for HIV or AIDS. Anti-retroviral treatment can slow the progression of HIV disease & delay the onset of AIDS. Early diagnosis & treatment can improve a person's chances of living a longer, healthier life.
POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES (IF LEFT UNTREATED)	Increased risk for infection of other STDs, including HIV. Some people with herpes may get recurrent sores. Passing herpes from mother to newborn is rare, but an infant with herpes can become very ill.	Increased risk for infection of other STDs, including HIV. Untreated, the infection stays in the body and can cause damage to the brain, heart, and nervous system, and even death. Syphilis in women can seriously harm a developing fetus during pregnancy.	Increased risk for infection of other STDs, including HIV. Chronic, persistent inflammation of the liver and later cirrhosis or cancer of the liver. Babies born to infected women are likely to develop chronic HBV infection if they don't get needed immunizations at birth (including HBV vaccination).	Increased risk for other life-threatening infections and certain cancers. By weakening the body's ability to fight disease, HIV makes an infected person more vulnerable to infections that they wouldn't otherwise get. HIV can also cause infections that anyone can get, such as other STDs and pneumonia, to be much worse. Left untreated, HIV infection is a fatal disease.