

## Resource 4 – Useful Info

Check for understanding by asking the students the following questions:

a. What is an STI?

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are infections which are mainly passed from one person to another (that is transmitted) during sexual contact. There are at least 25 different STIs with a range of different symptoms. These diseases may be spread through vaginal, anal or oral sex.

b. Who can contract STIs?

Anyone who has had unprotected sex with someone who has an STI can contract an STI. STIs are NOT exclusive to people who you may consider to be 'easy', prostitutes, homosexuals or drug addicts. You only need to have a sexual encounter with an infected person once to contract the infection.

c. How can we reduce the risk of contracting an STI?

There are a number of ways to prevent contracting an STI.

i. Abstinence: The only sure way to prevent contracting an STI is not to have oral, anal or vaginal sexual contact.

ii. Use condoms: Condoms are the recommended preventative measure, however, condoms only protect the skin they cover, any sores or warts found on the genital region not covered by the condom can still spread to another person's skin.

iii. Talk to your partner: Talk to your partner about safer sex practices, for example, using a condom. If you have a new partner discuss the option of you both being tested for an STI before committing to a sexual relationship.

iv. Get yourself tested and have regular check ups: When sexually active, even if you do not appear to have any symptoms, it is still very important to have regular tests and check ups to make sure you do not have an infection. Not all STIs show symptoms at first, if at all.

d. Do other birth control measures, other than the condom, protect against STIs?

NO. The birth control measures only protect against pregnancy, they will NOT protect against contracting an STI.

e. What are the symptoms of an STI?

Symptoms of sexually transmitted infections vary, but the most common are soreness, unusual lumps or sores, itching, pain when urinating, and/or an unusual discharge from the genital region.

f. Does everyone who contracts an STI show symptoms?

NO, STIs are a common problem because many people are carriers of the infection without realising it. In some cases, women do not realise they have been carriers until they show infertility problems in later life.

g. Where can I go for further advice and be tested?

Ask your school nurse or General Practitioner (GP).