

Sexually Transmitted Diseases



Here are some ways to stay healthy **EVERY DAY**:

Exercise - 30 minutes daily

Vitamin - 400 micrograms of folic acid daily

Educate yourself about medicines and toxins that can cause birth defects

Reproductive life planning

Yearly doctor visits to discuss physical and mental wellness

Diet - vegetables, fruits and whole grains daily

Avoid tobacco, drugs and alcohol

Your partner, friends, and family should be sources of support

Sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs, are infections you can get by having sex with someone who is infected. STDs are very common. Usually you can't tell if your partner is infected. STDs can cause serious health problems. Some can cause cancer or death. If you get pregnant, STDs can cause birth defects or illnesses in the baby. Some STDs can leave you unable to have children. They also increase your risk of a tubal pregnancy.

Types of STDs:

- **HIV/AIDS**- HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. HIV can be deadly for women and for their babies if they get pregnant. You can get HIV if you have sex with an infected person. You can also get HIV if you or your partner shares needles with other people who have HIV. HIV is a lifelong infection, but early treatment can help you stay well. Treatment may also prevent HIV from being passed to the baby if you get pregnant. All women should talk with their doctor about being tested for HIV.
- **Chlamydia and Gonorrhea**- These can cause serious infections. They can also cause damage that leaves you unable to have children.
- **Genital herpes**- Genital herpes can cause painful sores. You can get it from someone even when they do not have sores. If you get pregnant, genital herpes can lead to fatal infections in the baby.
- **Syphilis**- Syphilis is a serious infection. It can cause damage to the brain, heart, and bones. It can also cause death. If you get pregnant, syphilis can cause severe problems and death in the baby.
- **Human papillomavirus**- Human papillomavirus (HPV) can cause genital warts. It can also cause several types of cancer, such as cervical cancer. There is a vaccine you can get to prevent HPV. It is also important to get regular pap tests.
- **Hepatitis B**- Hepatitis B virus (HBV) can cause liver disease and liver cancer. If you get pregnant, it can cause severe liver problems and even death in the baby. There is a vaccine you can get to prevent HBV.

How to prevent STDs

You can prevent STDs by not having sex. You can also have sex with only one person who has been tested and does not have an STD. Your risk of getting some STDs goes down if you use latex condoms correctly. Your risk of getting an STD goes up if you have more than one sexual partner and unprotected sex. To prevent STDs, use a condom every time you have sex and get tested for STDs.

For more information about STDs in general and about specific STDs, go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/std/>

You can also call 1-800-367-2437 or 1-888-225-2437 (TDD)