

If you are sexually active, or thinking of becoming sexually active, it is important that you **Talk. Test. Treat.** to protect your health. These three small actions can have a big impact on your sexual health!



TALK

Talk openly and honestly to your partner(s) and your health care provider about sexual health and STDs.

Talk with your partner(s) **BEFORE** having sex. Not sure how? We have tips to help you [start the conversation](#). Make sure your discussion covers several important ways to make sex safer:

- Talk about when you were last tested and suggest getting tested together.
- If you have an STD (like herpes or HIV), tell your partner.
- Agree to only have sex with each other.
- [Use latex condoms](#) the right way for every act of vaginal, anal, and oral sex throughout the entire sex act (from start to finish).

[Talk with your health care provider](#) about your sex life as it relates to your health. This helps your health care provider understand [what STD tests you should be getting](#) and how often.

Here are a few questions you should expect and be prepared to answer honestly:

- Have you been sexually active in the last year?
- Do you have sex with men, women, or both?
- In the past 12 months, how many sexual partners have you had?
- Do you have anal, oral, or vaginal sex?
- What are you doing to protect yourself from STDs?

Not all medical checkups include STD testing, so don't assume that you've been tested unless you discuss it with your provider. If your provider does not discuss sex or STD testing with you, bring it up.

Ask your health care provider whether certain vaccines, like the [hepatitis B vaccine](#) or the [HPV vaccine](#) are right for you.

TEST

Get tested. It's the only way to know for sure if you have an STD.

Many STDs don't cause any symptoms, so you could have one and not know. If you're having sex, getting tested is one of the most important things you can do to protect your health.

Learn which [STD tests CDC recommends](#) for you. Even if you're pregnant, you can still get an STD. If you're having sex, you're still at risk.

Find out what STD care options are available near you. In addition to traditional, in-person visits, other options that may be available include:

- **Video or phone appointments** with your health care provider.
- **Express visits** for STD testing and treatment without a full clinical exam.
- **Pharmacies and retail clinics**, such as at a grocery store or big-box store, for on-site testing and treatment.
- **At-home collection** where you collect your own sample and take or mail it to a lab for testing.

If you're not comfortable talking with your regular health care provider about STDs, [find a clinic](#) near you that provides confidential testing that's free or low cost.

TREAT

If you test positive for an STD, work with your health care provider to get the correct treatment.

Some STDs can be cured with the right medicine, and all STDs are treatable. Make sure your treatment works by doing these things:

- Take all of the medication your health care provider prescribes, even if you start feeling better or your symptoms go away.
- Don't share your medicine with anyone.
- Avoid having sex again until you and your sex partner(s) have all completed treatment.

Your health care provider can talk with you about which medications are right for you.