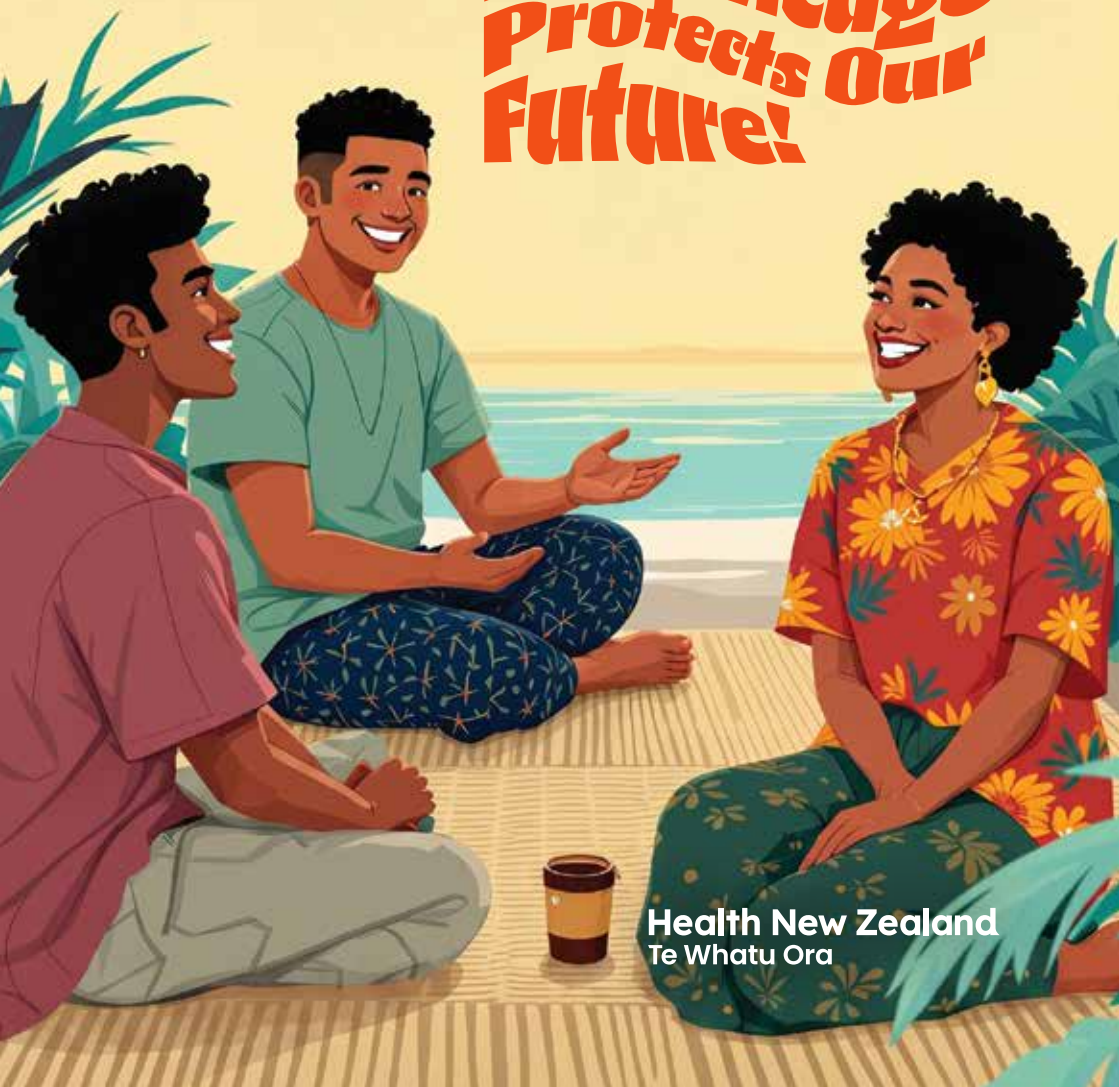


LET'S TALANOA Knowledge Protects Our Future!



Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

Kia ora and warm Pacific greetings!

Welcome to our safe space where we talanoa and discuss sexual health openly and respectfully. Together, we'll learn about HIV and common sexually transmitted infections (STIs), their treatment, the importance of consent, and the sexual health and support services available in New Zealand.

This resource was adapted from a presentation created by Gio Fonua – To'a.

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What are Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)?

Infections

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) spread through sexual contact. They can affect anyone.

Common types

There are many different STIs. An STI check usually includes testing for HIV, syphilis, gonorrhoea and chlamydia.

Preventable

These infections are preventable; early detection and treatment is important.

Empowering individuals to be informed!



How STIs spread



Sexual contact

The main methods of transmission include unprotected vaginal and anal intercourse/sex. Some STIs can also be passed on through unprotected oral sex. Use of condoms reduces the risk.



Skin contact

Some STIs like herpes and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) spread through skin-to-skin touching.



Other routes

Infections can be passed to babies during pregnancy or birth. Sharing needles can spread HIV and other infections.

Recognising STI symptoms

Often silent

Many infections show no symptoms. You can have an STI for months or even years without knowing it.

Warning signs

Unusual discharge, pain during urination and sex, genital sores, rashes, or painful blisters may indicate infection. Don't ignore them.

If you're unsure, GET TESTED!

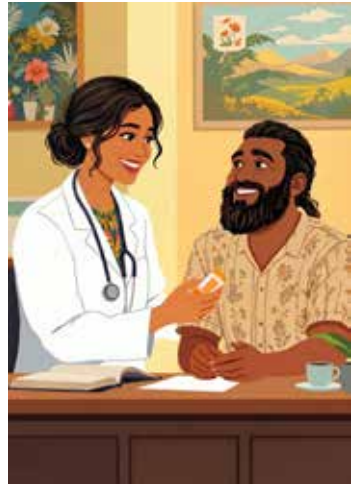
Make STI testing part of your routine healthcare

- An STI test is the only sure way to know if you have an STI.
- A test consists of a blood test and swab(s) and /or urine.
- You can usually do the swab(s) yourself – your doctor or nurse will explain how.

When to test:

- If you're sexually active but you've never had a test
- If you have signs or symptoms
- If someone you've had sex with has an infection
- If you're pregnant
- If you change sexual partners

If you're worried about a specific sexual encounter, speak to your doctor or nurse about when best to test.



Treatment options for STIs

Bacterial STIs

Chlamydia responds to oral antibiotics. Gonorrhoea requires an antibiotic injection. Syphilis involves 1-3 shots of antibiotic injections. Even though you feel better, you MUST COMPLETE the full course of treatment.

Viral STIs

Viral infections like HIV or herpes are usually managed with oral medicines.

Partner notification

TELL your partner(s) if you're diagnosed. They need testing too.
THIS BREAKS THE CYCLE.

Understanding HIV

Human Immunodeficiency Virus

What is HIV?

A virus that attacks immune cells. It can be passed on to others through vaginal and anal sex, blood (eg sharing needles) and during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding.

How it works

Weakens the body's ability to fight off infections and diseases, making individuals more vulnerable to other illnesses.

AIDS

Advanced stage of HIV infection if untreated.

The body's defense system becomes extremely weakened, making the body at risk for infectious diseases and cancer.

Treatment

Effective medications are available and are free for everyone in NZ.

Living well

HIV requires lifelong management. With the right treatment, people will stay well, and cannot pass it on to partners.

Early detection makes a huge difference!

HIV treatment and support

1

Medical treatment

Antiretroviral therapy (ART) controls the virus and keeps people well.

2

Ongoing care

Regular check-ups and monitoring of health. Medication adjustments may be recommended over time. Support services are available.

3

Healthy lifestyle

Good nutrition, exercise, and mental health support. Avoid smoking, and vaping, and limit alcohol intake.

4

Access

Treatment is through Infectious Diseases or Sexual Health Services. Treatment is free for everyone.

5

Prevention

HIV can be prevented by using a condom during sex, or with medicines called PrEP and PEP. Speak to your healthcare provider about what is right for you.



Understanding consent & the legal reality

Consent prevents harm, builds trust, and respects personal boundaries.

- Consent must be freely given without pressure.
- At any point, you or they have the right to walk away.
- Consent to one activity doesn't imply consent to others.
- Consent cannot be given while someone is asleep, intoxicated, or under the influence of drugs.

Consequences:

Criminal charges

If someone does a sexual act without consent, they are breaking the law. This includes unwanted sex or touching, or the taking or sharing of naked pictures without permission. Any of these can lead to imprisonment, a fine, or both. This can also lead to deportation.

Professional consequences

Job loss, loss of income

Social impact

Damage to relationships and reputation

Sexual health services in New Zealand

For more information on clinics and their specific locations, visit info.health.nz/sexual-health-clinics:

All these services are committed to offering confidential, culturally sensitive care, and are often free.

Testing is also available through Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa or your GP (charges may apply).



Support services and resources

Burnett Foundation Aotearoa

An organisation focusing on the prevention of HIV transmission, combating stigma, and maximising the wellbeing of those most affected by HIV. Information on HIV prevention, including PrEP. Free testing is available.

Body Positive Inc

A peer support organisation, founded by and run for all people living with HIV in NZ. Information on HIV prevention, including PrEP. Free testing is available.

Positive Women Inc

A support organisation for women and families living with and affected by HIV. They promote HIV awareness through educational programmes with a focus on the de-stigmatisation of HIV. Free testing is available.

Toitū Te Ao

Support for Māori, Pacific Peoples, and Indigenous Peoples affected by HIV.

Te Taenga Mai

A website providing information on HIV prevention and support for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Free testing is available.

Just the Facts

Information about sexual health and STIs.

Needle Exchange Services

A nationwide programme distributing needles and syringes through a national network of dedicated outlets and pharmacies.

New Zealand Herpes Foundation

Where to find up-to-date information and non-judgmental support for genital herpes.

Safe to Talk

A free and confidential service for help to do with sexual harm. Contact them if you have been sexually harmed, want to help someone, or want more information about sexual harm.

WorkSafe

Guidance for workers on reporting sexual harassment in the workplace.

Note to self

You are a valuable member of our community

- ✓ Seeking help shows courage, not weakness.
EARLY DETECTION MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE!
- ✓ We are here as a village to support you.
- ✓ You are never alone!
- ✓ Respect "NO" and learn to say 'NO'. Always seek clear consent.
'Yes' to one activity doesn't mean yes to everything.
- ✓ Taking care of your holistic wellbeing today ensures a vibrant tomorrow for you and your loved ones.

