

STI Smarts

A Lesson Plan from Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum

Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.

ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR LESSON:

Print out enough copies of the "Exit Slips" sheet and cut them in half so that each student will have one half sheet. Print one copy of the Teacher's Guide: STD Smarts found at the end of this lesson plan document. Make sure the PowerPoint works in Slideshow mode

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Name at least three STD symptoms. [Knowledge]
2. Name at least three facts about STD testing. [Knowledge]
3. Apply knowledge about STD symptoms and testing to hypothetical situations relating to safer sex. [Knowledge, Skill]
4. Name one teen-friendly online resource and name one local STD testing and treatment site [Knowledge, Skill]

A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE:

Language is really important and we've intentionally been very careful about our language throughout this curriculum. You may notice language that seems less familiar - using the pronoun "they" instead of "her" or "him", using "partner", and referring to "a person with a cervix" and "a person with a penis" vs. man or woman. When discussing penetrative sex, be specific (i.e. penis-vagina sex vs heterosexual sex). This is intended to make the curriculum inclusive of all genders and gender identities.

PROCEDURE:

STEP 1: Ask, "How many people have watched a trivia game show on TV, where people answer questions for points or for particular dollar amounts? Well, we're going to do the same now – only our topic is STIs, and you're playing for points, not money, sorry!"

Divide the class into five groups.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Desktop or laptop computer with PowerPoint loaded onto it
- LCD projector and screen • Exit slips – one per student • PowerPoint: STD Smarts
- Teacher's Guide: STD Smarts –one copy
- Homework: "The STD Info I Need" – one per student
- Small, inexpensive prizes, enough for five students on the winning team (optional)
- A bag of chocolate miniatures, enough for the remaining students so that everyone gets something in recognition of their hard work (optional)

Note to the Teacher: *The PowerPoint must be in slideshow mode for the links to work. It will not work in Google Slides*

As they are moving to get into the groups, write

“Group One, Group Two, Group Three, Group Four, Group Five” in a vertical line on the board with space between each and space to the right

Once students are in their groups, give them 2 minutes to select a name for their group. Tell them not to put too much thought into it, and if they don't come up with something in 2 minutes, you'll just call them by their group number. After 2 minutes, write each group name on the board beneath the group number.

(3 minutes)

STEP 2: Put the “STI Smarts” PowerPoint game up on the screen. Say, “Each team will select a category and have the option of answering a question. Each group needs to select a spokesperson who will speak for the group; why don't you go ahead and do that now.” Refer to the Teacher's Guide found on page four of this document.

Say, “If you look at the screen, you'll see there are six categories of questions. Let me explain what each means:

1. Which One Is Riskiest? -- will give you a group of three behaviors; you need to decide which of the three puts a person at HIGHEST risk.
2. Testing, Testing – is, big surprise, all about getting tested for STIs.
3. Can I Be Cured? – some STIs can be cured easily with medication. Others stay in our bodies but symptoms can be treated with medication. Still others stay in our bodies for a long time but are fought off naturally by our immune systems. This category will ask you whether the STI can be cured.
4. What Should They Do? – This is a category that describes a situation a person or couple is experiencing, and you need to say what they should do in that situation.
5. I Don't Feel So Good... is all about STI symptoms.
6. Myth or Fact? speaks for itself.

Explain that as the point value goes up, so does the difficulty of the question! Answer any questions from the students about the rules or the categories. Then randomly select one of the teams to go first, and ask that team to get started by selecting their category. (6 minutes)

STEP 3: Conduct the activity, asking “why” on questions that merit further discussion (such as the “Which One Is Riskiest?” category.) Use the Teacher's Guide to correct any misinformation or to explain an answer further. Keep score as you go along. (35 minutes)

STEP 4: Acknowledge the winning team(s) and give prizes to everyone if you have them (optional). Process the activity by asking the following questions:

- What was it like to do that?
- What was [fun, hard, interesting – add in their responses] about it?

- Of all the information we went through, did anything surprise you?

Explain that there is a lot of information out there about STIs, including how to avoid them and how to lower your risk of contracting them.

Tell them that for homework they are going to be given two websites to visit, one of which has information on it, and one of which is a video of a speaker. They will need to take a look at each and determine which they think provides accurate, reliable information and which doesn't and why.

Distribute the homework and answer any questions. Distribute exit slips and collect them from students as they leave class. (6 minutes)

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

The PowerPoint game is designed to achieve the first three learning objectives; the online homework assignment will accomplish the fourth.

HOMEWORK:

Students will analyze a sexual health website for content and accuracy and use a teen health search engine to find local resources for testing and treatment of STIs and pregnancy options.

Teacher's Guide: STI Smarts

WHICH ONE IS RISKIEST IF DONE WITH A PARTNER WHO HAS AN STI?

Open mouth kissing, holding hands, using a public toilet (10 pts)

ANSWER: Open mouth kissing

Although open mouth kissing is lower risk for STIs than other intimate behaviors, of these three it's the only one that carries risk for oral herpes (and possibly oral syphilis and definitely COVID - which is not an STD of course) Holding hands and using a public toilet cannot transmit STDs.

Abstinence, mutual masturbation, outercourse (20 pts)

ANSWER: Outercourse

Note to the Teacher: Be sure to clarify that "mutual masturbation" refers to two people touching each other's genitals.

Abstinence, not having any kind of sex, carries zero risk for STIs; mutual masturbation also carries no risk for STIs (Mutual masturbation - carries some theoretical risk if person had a cut on their finger). Outercourse, or when two people rub their bodies together, is very low risk – depending on how people do it. If they are completely clothed, there is zero risk. If they are naked, there is more risk. If they are just wearing underwear there can still be risk if the underwear moves around. Three low to no-risk behaviors – but of the three, outercourse has a slightly higher risk.

Performing oral sex on another person, receiving oral sex from another person, having penis-vagina sex with a condom (30 pts)

ANSWER: Performing oral sex on another person

Condoms offer extremely effective protection against most STIs. Having unprotected sex of any kind carries high risk for STIs. When it comes to oral sex, the person performing oral sex is at higher risk because their mouth is coming into contact with the other person's genitals. People can reduce their STI risk further by using flavored condoms or other barriers.

Having unprotected penis-vagina sex in a swimming pool, having protected oral sex, mutual masturbation (40 pts)

ANSWER: Having unprotected penis-vagina sex. Doesn't matter where you have it, if it's unprotected, you can be at high risk for STDs and/or pregnancy. Oral sex using a latex barrier of some kind carries much lower risk, and mutual masturbation carries no risk.

Unprotected oral sex, unprotected penis-vagina sex, unprotected anal sex (50 pts)

ANSWER: Unprotected anal sex. This is the highest risk behavior for STDs, including HIV. However unprotected penis-vagina sex is also a risk for pregnancy

TESTING, TESTING

TRUE OR FALSE: there is one type of test that can screen for the most common STIs (10pts)

ANSWER: FALSE! It's really important when you get tested to talk with a healthcare provider about what you want to be tested for. Also, when you talk with a partner about being in a sexual relationship, you need to ask that person what they've been tested for, not just "have you been tested for STIs?" A lot of people believe there is one test for all STIs, so they may not know themselves!

TRUE OR FALSE: Minors (age 18 and younger) must have a parent or guardian's consent to be tested for STIs (20 pts)

ANSWER: FALSE! You do not need parental permission to get tested for STIs. There are some other sexual health services that may need a parent or guardian's permission – so you always want to ask before going into a clinic or when you make an appointment.

Name two types of places where people can go to get tested for STIs

(30 pt)

ANSWER: A doctor's office, a sexual or reproductive health clinic (like Planned Parenthood) or the Department of Health. Some school-based health centers will do STI testing, too, and several major pharmacy store chains carry an at-home HIV test. Teen Source is an online site that has info about STI testing- www.teensource.org/find-a-clinic and CDC also has an online site to find info about HIV and STI testing <https://gettested.cdc.gov>

TRUE OR FALSE: If a person thinks they might have been exposed to an STD, they should get tested within 24 hours. (40 pts)

ANSWER: FALSE! Different STIs can be detected in tests after different time periods after exposure to an infected partner. The most important thing is to not have sex again until you can get tested to avoid possibly transmitting an STI to the other person. It's also a good reminder to use condoms or other latex barriers for every act of oral, anal and vaginal sex!

People with a cervix are tested for HPV when they get pap tests; how are people with a penis tested? (50 pts)

ANSWER: HPV stands for the Human Papillomavirus. It can cause genital warts, or it can cause cancer of the cervix and many other types of cancer (vaginal, vulvar, anal, penile, oropharyngeal) There is no HPV test for a penis – a person with a penis will only know if they have it if they notice visible warts or a sexual partner notifies them of possible exposure. You can get an oral or anal swab to check for HPV in the throat or rectum.

CAN I BE CURED?

Chlamydia (10 pts)

ANSWER: Yes! Chlamydia is a very common STI, especially among teens and often causes no symptoms. It can be cured by taking antibiotics. If you are prescribed antibiotics, you must take them for the entire time they're prescribed, which can be for up to seven days and have any partners tested too.

Syphilis (20 pts)

ANSWER: Yes! Syphilis is cured with penicillin. It's important to get treatment as early as possible, because if left undetected, syphilis can cause damage to the body that can't be reversed.

HIV (30 pts)

ANSWER: No! HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is a virus that stays in the body but can be treated with a combination of medicines that control the virus so that people can live otherwise healthy, typical lives. There is also medicine that people can take to try to prevent getting HIV called PrEP.

Gonorrhea (40 pts_

ANSWER: Yes! It can be cured by taking antibiotics. If you are prescribed antibiotics, you must take them for the entire time they're prescribed, which can be for up to seven days.

Genital Warts (50 pts_

ANSWER: No! Genital warts are caused by a virus called HPV. The visible warts can be treated or removed, and medication can treat the virus. In some cases, the body will naturally fight off HPV (although generally not the strains that cause visible warts), but otherwise, it cannot be cured. Many people are able to clear the HPV virus on their own over time and some are able to clear the type that causes genital warts-however many people opt to get their warts treated. The best way to prevent getting genital warts is to get the HPV vaccine prior to any sexual exposures.

WHAT SHOULD THEY DO?

A person has never had sex before. Their partner has, but only once. Do they need to use condoms? (10 pts)

ANSWER: YES! If someone has vaginal, oral or anal sex with another person, they could have been exposed to an STI.

A couple is making out and it looks like they may have sex. One partner takes out a condom and the other says, "I don't use those." What should the other partner do? (20 pts)

ANSWER: Stop making out and say, clearly, "I do – we can't have sex without them." If the other person still refuses, the partner needs to either say what they are or aren't willing to do that doesn't include oral, anal or vaginal sex – or leave.

A couple is about to have sex for the first time. They know they need to use condoms but don't want to be seen buying them in a store. What are two other places they can go to get condoms? (30 pts)

ANSWER: A doctor's office, Planned Parenthood or other sexual and reproductive health clinic, the department of health, pharmacy, grocery store or ask a friend or family member. (can also get them online)

A couple is having penis-vagina sex, and the condom slips off. They don't have any more condoms with them. (40 pts)

ANSWER: They need to stop what they're doing. If they wish to continue to have sex, they need to get some additional condoms (this is why you should always have extras on hand!). They also should decide whether either or both of them should go get tested for STIs, or whether pregnancy could be a risk.

A person notices small red bumps on the outside of their genitals. They don't look like the gross slides they saw in science class at school so maybe it's a heat rash. They've had sex before and used condoms a few times. (50 pts)

ANSWER: They need to get tested for STIs. They also need to tell their partner, and they need to start using condoms every time they have any kind of sex moving forward.

I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD...

TRUE OR FALSE: There are homemade methods to tell if someone has an STI. (10 pts)

ANSWER: FALSE! There are lots of myths out there about how you can tell whether someone has an STI. The only way to know for sure is to get tested. Many of these myths can cause infections so please don't experiment.

Name three common symptoms of most STIs (20 pts)

ANSWER: No symptom, burning or itching in the genitals; burning when you urinate; small bumps or sores on or around the genitals, mouth or anus; discharge from a penis or vagina (that's different from typical vaginal discharge that's part of its normal daily cleaning process that has changed color, smell or amount and is not urine or semen).

TRUE OR FALSE: A common symptom of STIs is bruising more easily

(30 pts) ANSWER: False! The two have nothing to do with each other.

Two weeks after being infected with this virus, a person may experience a sudden, intense onset of severe flu-like symptoms (40 pts)

ANSWER: HIV. The main point of this is when you're usually sick, the symptoms start to creep up on you – you feel kind of tired, then kind of achy – and then you get sick. These symptoms appear suddenly and intensely, and go away just as suddenly. (Now, for those of you who start getting a cold anytime soon and think you have HIV – please remember, you can only get HIV from having sexual contact with someone who has it!).

What is the MOST common symptom of an STI? (50 pts)

ANSWER: No symptom. People often see pictures of genitals with bumps and sores on them and think that's what an STI looks like. Often, there are no symptoms – and sometimes the symptoms are inside the body and you just don't see them. Since you can't tell by looking at someone, it's best to use condoms and other latex barriers every time you have oral, anal or vaginal sex.

MYTH OR FACT?

Basketball player Magic Johnson, previously diagnosed with HIV, no longer has the virus (10 pts)

ANSWER: Myth! Magic Johnson is lucky to have had the resources and access to get very good HIV medication early on in his diagnosis, and he continues to stick with his medication. This means the amount of virus is very, very low – so low that it doesn't come up on tests. This doesn't mean he no longer has the virus – it means he's doing a great job of controlling it and needs to keep doing what he's doing to always keep it this low.

Once a person has genital warts removed, they can no longer give the virus to someone else (20 pts)

ANSWER: Myth! The warts are symptoms of the HPV virus. The virus is still in the body, and new warts can develop later. Warts do not need to be visible to pass HPV on to another person. This is why using latex condoms and other barriers with every act of oral, anal or vaginal sex is so important. People can get the HPV vaccine starting at age 9 which protects from the most common strains of HPV that cause warts and cancer.

If a person gets chlamydia, takes the entire course of antibiotics and is cured, they cannot get chlamydia again (30 pts)

ANSWER: Myth! Antibiotics cure that "round" of a particular infection. Someone can get chlamydia (or gonorrhea or syphilis), be cured of it and then get it again if they have unprotected sex with someone who has any of those infections.

There is currently a vaccine available for two STIs (40 pts)

ANSWER: Fact! One vaccine protects against several strains of HPV that can cause cancer (it can be taken by someone of any gender) and one inoculates against Hepatitis B.

A baby born to an HIV+ person can be born HIV (50 pts)

ANSWER: Fact! Someone who is pregnant and has HIV *can* pass HIV onto their fetus during pregnancy or childbirth, or to their baby during breastfeeding. But there are medications a person can take while pregnant that can significantly reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to a fetus.

Homework:

Finding Accurate STI Information

Name: _____ Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Visit each of the following websites and answer the questions

Example One: Sex, Etc.

sexetc.org/sex-ed/info-center/faqs

Questions:

1. What is one **FAQ** about HIV/AIDS and STDS that you didn't know before?
2. What is one **Resource** about HIV/AIDS and STDs that seems accurate?
3. Is this a website you'd go to for information? Why or why not?

Example Two: Your Neighborhood Health Center

www.teensource.org/find-a-clinic

Questions:

1. Find a clinic in or near your zip code. What is the name and address?
2. Does this location provide... (circle)
 - STD testing? Yes / No
 - STD treatment? Yes / No
 - HIV testing? Yes / No
 - PrEP/PEP? Yes / No
 - Pregnancy testing? Yes / No
3. Does this seem like a teen friendly resource? Why or why not?

Exit Slip – Before You Go...

Name: _____

What are two things you learned about STIs from today's class?

1.

2.

Exit Slip – Before You Go...

Name: _____

What are two things you learned about STIs from today's class?

1.

2.