

What Can I Do About It?

Be Smart. Be Well. – STD Videos

[Announcer] This podcast is presented the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

[Dr. John Douglas] A large proportion of people who get various sexually transmitted infections never know it. They never develop symptoms. And that's important because you can't tell if somebody's got an STD by looking at them. And I can't tell if I've got an STD by how I feel.

[Dr. Renee Jenkins] Very often when I diagnose a sexually transmitted disease in a young person, they say, "How did I get it?". I say, "You know, they don't come with people's names on them." So I don't know how you happened to get it, but the problem is you didn't protect yourself.

[Lynn Barclay] Sexual responsibility is really important. I have a responsibility to myself, that I'm getting tested, as well as responsibility to my partners, making sure that they're tested.

[Ida] When you give your body to someone else, you're giving them full control over your life. Protect yourself, make everybody use a condom.

[Dr. Jill Grimes] Condoms work very well to prevent HIV and *Trichomonas* and gonorrhea and chlamydia. Condoms can't protect against diseases that are spread outside the area that a condom covers, such as herpes or syphilis or genital warts, the HPV virus. It's really important to use them all the time, including for oral sex.

[Molly] Ask all the right questions before you get involved with someone physically and use the very best judgment that you have with regard to the possibilities of being intimate with someone.

[Dr. Renee Jenkins] Telling your doctor about your behavior when they ask and telling the truth is so important.

[Dr. William Wong] Getting tested is very simple and it's an easy process. For gonorrhea or chlamydia infections, all you have to do is provide a very small sample of urine. A quick and easy blood draw can accomplish syphilis and HIV testing. Sexually transmitted diseases like gonorrhea or chlamydia --these are bacterial infections that can be easily treated with antibiotics. If it's a viral sexually transmitted infection, like herpes or human papillomavirus or even HIV, these conditions can be managed with medical care.

[Dr. Renee Jenkins] Abstinence and limiting partners, having a monogamous relationship, is really the best way to try to protect yourself and prevent having these diseases.

[Lynn Barclay] Talk to kids when there's an opportunity. The bottom line is -- start talking to them about it early, give them the ammunition to deal with the peer pressure and the partner pressure that they are going to experience.

[Dr. John Douglas] So, what's a reasonable way for someone to respond to having the diagnosis of sexually transmitted disease? I like to think about them as four P's. First of all, perspective. It can be frightening. It can be demoralizing. But keep perspective about it. This is, in most circumstances, gonna be an easily manageable problem. Number two, take care of it. So see your provider and get it dealt with. "P" number three is your partner. You may have transmitted it to somebody else. They may need care and treatment, as well. And then finally, prevention. What can you do to enhance your sexual health in the future?

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.