How Can I Protect My Present and Future Partners?

If you are receiving treatment for an STD, do not have sex with anyone until you have finished all medications.

Many people become re-infected from the person they passed the disease on to, thereby causing a "ping-pong" effect.

Do not have sex with present partners until they have been tested and finished all medications.

The germs that cause STDs enter the body through the moist lining of the vagina, penis, rectum or even the mouth. Since these are passed from one person to another during sexual activity, the best way to avoid transmission is abstinence. If abstinence is not possible, use safer sex practices. Do not allow any of your (or your partner's) body fluids to pass between the two of you. Always use a condom for vaginal, anal or oral sex. Use dental dams as barriers for oral-vaginal sex and oral-anal contact.

Avoid having sex when you're drunk or high.

No matter how serious you are about safe sex, drinking alcohol or using other drugs makes it harder to stay safe.

This publication has been brought to you courtesyof Panhandle Health District and the Idaho State STD/ AIDS Program.

Some Common Questions:

Am I Infected now?

The only way to find out is to get tested. Anyone exposed should be tested.

Where did I catch this?

Many people want to believe that STDs can be spread by ways other than sexual contact. The answer to this question will be different for each person. It is important to focus not on the other person, but on the medical aspects of the disease. Focusing on blame will not resolve the serious medical consequences of these diseases. At a later date, the effects on the relationship can be approached.

I feel fine and don't have any sores or discharge, so I must be all right.

Many of the STDs are asymptomatic (no symptoms) and a person may feel fine now but may end up in the emergency room next week or month.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your local Panhandle Health District Office.

Kootenai County
8500 N. Atlas Road
Hayden ID 83835
208 415-5100

Bonner County
1020 Michigan
Sandpoint ID 83864
208 263-5159

Boundary County
7402 Caribou
Bonners Ferry ID 83805
208 267-5558

Benewah County
137 N 8th St
St. Maries ID 83861
208 245-4556

Shoshone County
114 W Riverside
Kellogg ID 83837
208 786-7474

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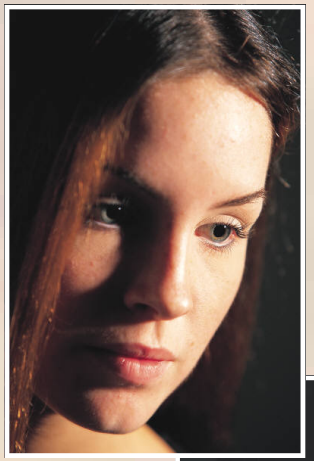
I have a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD)



How Do I Tell My Partner?

Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Partner Notification Brochure

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Panhandle Health District

Panhandle Health District
Healthy People in Healthy Communities
www.phd1.idaho.gov

I HAVE A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE…HOW DO I TELL MY PARTNER?

I WANT TO TELL MY PARTNER(S), HOW SHOULD I DO THIS?

Talking about this with partners is not easy, but it is very important. You may not be able to control their reactions, but there are things you can do to make it go more smoothly. Some partners have strong emotional reactions; some may act angry; some may become so frightened that they refuse to get tested; some may withdraw; others may lash out with verbal abuse. Some partners may even become violent. Some partners may not keep this information private and they may tell other people about it. You probably have an idea of how your partner(s) will react. However, sometimes partners will not respond in the way you expect. **A good rule is to be prepared for the unexpected and make sure you will be safe.** You cannot control your partner's reactions, but you can control your own.

TIMING IS IMPORTANT

Choose a time to talk with your partner when he or she can give you his or her undivided attention. Your partner will need to be able to listen carefully. You will also need to allow enough time to explain and discuss the problem.

I DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE TELLING MY PARTNER(S) ABOUT THIS.

You can choose to have the infection control staff notify your partner(s) for you. At no time will your name or any other identifying information be given to your partner(s) during notification, testing, or treatment.

LOCATION IS IMPORTANT

Choose a place that is quiet, private, free of interruptions and most of all, safe. Privacy will help you and your partner focus and listen. If there is a chance your partner may become violent, choose a public place where you will be safe.

THE WORDS YOU CHOOSE ARE IMPORTANT

Choose words that are kind and thoughtful. Do not accuse your partner of infecting you or assume that they are infected.

Ex: **Wrong**: "You infected me with Chlamydia."
Wrong: "You have Chlamydia."
Right: "I have tested positive for Chlamydia and I thought you might want to be tested to see if you need treatment too."

Let your partner know that they have been exposed to a sexually transmitted disease (STD). This does not mean that they are infected, but there is a chance that they may be. The only way they can know for sure is to get tested. Make sure that your partner knows what disease he or she is at risk for.

TELL YOUR PARTNER(S) HOW TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION

Your partner needs to know that this is a serious problem and there are medical solutions available to them. Ask your partner what their plans are for dealing with this. They may need to be motivated to act quickly. Many people have no symptoms of disease. Because of this, your partner may feel that they are not infected. They may also feel that you caught this from someone else, however, they need to understand that they are still at high risk of being infected. Seeing this as "your" problem will not help them. Your partner needs to get tested and may require treatment. Tell your partner that they can make a confidential appointment to get tested at the Health Department or with a private physician. You need to ensure that your partner gets tested as soon as possible.

HOW MIGHT MY PARTNER(S) REACT TO THIS INFORMATION?

You don't need to know the answers to all of the questions. Many of them can be answered when your partner seeks medical care.