The STI/HIV Testing Tool is a resource for GPs and other clinicians to support routine comprehensive testing for sexually transmissible infections (STIs) among ‘at risk’ patients.

**STEP 1** Starting a conversation about sexual health testing

Offering routine STI/HIV testing helps patients feel more comfortable and willing to discuss their sexual health.

### Examples of how routine STI/HIV testing can be offered:

**Young people (15–29 years):**

“STIs are very common among young people and they may not even know they have an STI. We encourage all sexually active young people to get tested regularly for STIs. Would you like a sexual health check-up today?”

**Reproductive health consultations:**

“While you’re here for advice about contraception/cervical screening it’s a good time to talk about other areas of sexual health, like having a sexual health check-up…”

**Travel consultations:**

“Some people take risks when they travel overseas and that includes having unprotected sex. If you like, we could do a sexual health check-up before you go and when you return.”

**Hepatitis B vaccination:**

“Have you had a hepatitis B vaccination? It protects against an infection that can be sexually transmitted. Do you want to talk about this today?”

### Risk assessment (sexual history)

Ask these questions in the following order to identify potential risks and which tests to perform:

- “I’d like to ask you some questions about your sexual activity so we can decide what tests to do:”
  - When did you last have sex?
  - Was that with a regular or casual partner?
  - Was it with a man, a woman, or both?
  - Did you use condoms?
  - When you had sex, was it vaginal, oral or anal sex?
  - When did you last have sex with a different person?
  - Did you use condoms with them?


**Note:** STI/HIV testing requires only ‘informed consent’. In NSW HIV ‘pre-test counselling’ is no longer required.

**STI/HIV Testing Tool available at:**

### Recommendations from the Australian STI Management Guidelines

#### Who is the patient?  | What infection?  | How often should you test?
---|---|---
**Young people (15–29 years)**  | CHLAMYDIA  | Annually
HEPATITIS B  | Confirm HBV immune status (history of prior vaccination or serology) and vaccinate if not immune<sup>2</sup>
GONORRHOEA  | SYPHILIS HIV  | Consider according to risk assessment and local STI and HIV prevalence<sup>3</sup>

**Asymptomatic people requesting STI/HIV testing**  | CHLAMYDIA  | Annually or more often according to risk assessment
HEPATITIS B  | Confirm HBV immune status (history of prior vaccination or serology) and vaccinate if not immune<sup>2</sup>
GONORRHOEA  | SYPHILIS HIV  | Consider according to risk assessment and local STI and HIV prevalence<sup>3</sup>
HIV  |  |  

**Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people**  | CHLAMYDIA  | Annually or more often according to risk assessment
GONORRHOEA  | SYPHILIS HIV  | Consider a low threshold for offering testing for all infections — risk assessments assist with appropriate STI/BBV testing but are difficult to implement in some situations<sup>*</sup> Especially in the presence of other STIs<sup>3</sup>  
HEPATITIS C HIV<sup>4</sup>  | Consider a low threshold for offering testing for all infections — risk assessments assist with appropriate STI/BBV testing but are difficult to implement in some situations<sup>*</sup> Especially in the presence of other STIs<sup>3</sup>  
HEPATITIS B  | Confirm HBV immune status (history of prior vaccination or serology) and vaccinate if not immune<sup>2</sup>
TRICHOMONIASIS  | Test those from rural/regional/remote areas

**Men who have sex with men (MSM)**  (ref: STIGMA Guidelines<sup>5</sup>)  | CHLAMYDIA  | GONORRHOEA SYPHILIS HIV  |  |  
**HEPATITIS A**  | HEPATITIS B  | Confirm HAV and HBV immune status (history of prior vaccination or serology) and vaccinate if not immune<sup>2</sup>
HEPATITIS C  |  | If HIV-positive, on PrEP or have history of injecting drug use

**Sex workers**  (see ‘MSM’ for male sex workers)  | CHLAMYDIA  | GONORRHOEA SYPHILIS HIV  | Testing should be based on: local STI prevalence; symptoms; diagnosed or suspected STI in contact; and clinical findings  
Frequency based on risk assessment (private and professional life)  
Offer testing more often if condom use is <100% (including history of condom breakages/slippages) or at patient request
HEPATITIS A  | HEPATITIS B  | Confirm HAV and HBV immune status (history of prior vaccination or serology) and vaccinate if not immune<sup>2</sup>
HEPATITIS C  |  | According to risk assessment: If antibody positive, test for hepatitis C NAAT to determine if patient has chronic hepatitis C

**People who inject drugs (PWID)**  | CHLAMYDIA  | GONORRHOEA SYPHILIS HIV  | Annually or more often according to risk assessment
HEPATITIS A  | HEPATITIS B  | Confirm HAV and HBV immune status (history of prior vaccination or serology) and vaccinate if not immune<sup>2</sup>
HIV  | HEPATITIS C  | According to risk assessment and annually with an ongoing history of injecting drugs

**Pregnant women**  (ref: Department of Health 2019 & RACGP<sup>6</sup>)  | CHLAMYDIA  | Women younger than 30 years / All pregnant women in areas of high prevalence
GONORRHOEA  |  | Women with known risk factors or living in areas where prevalence is high

---

**Routine test** offer to all pregnant women

**Hepatitis B**  | Test all and vaccinate susceptible women who are at increased risk/not immunised

**HIV**  | Recommend testing at the first antenatal visit  
*Repeat syphilis testing for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women according to local recommendations and other women at high risk. Testing at additional time points is recommended in areas affected by an ongoing syphilis outbreak.

**Targeted test** offer for women identified as at increased risk

**CHLAMYDIA**  | 
**GONORRHOEA**  |
### STEP 2B

**How to test** - infection, specimen site & test type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFECTION</th>
<th>SPECIMEN COLLECTION SITE</th>
<th>TEST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEMALES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHLAMYDIA</strong></td>
<td>Vaginal swab* OR First pass urine (at any time of the day)* OR Endocervical swab**</td>
<td>Chlamydia NAAT (PCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Self-collected  **Clinician-collected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GONORRHOEA</strong></td>
<td>Vaginal swab* OR First pass urine (at any time of the day)* OR Endocervical swab**</td>
<td>Gonorrhoea NAAT (PCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Throat swab (for female sex workers ONLY)**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Self-collected  **Clinician-collected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRICHOMONIASIS</strong></td>
<td>Vaginal swab* OR First pass urine (at any time of the day)*</td>
<td>Trichomonas NAAT (PCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Self-collected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MALES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHLAMYDIA</strong></td>
<td>First pass urine (at any time of the day)* – AND THE FOLLOWING FOR MSM: Throat swab (for MSM)** Rectal swab (for MSM)**</td>
<td>Chlamydia NAAT (PCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Self-collected  **Clinician-collected  ***Self-collected or Clinician-collected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GONORRHOEA</strong></td>
<td>First pass urine (at any time of the day)* Throat swab (for MSM)** Rectal swab (for MSM)**</td>
<td>Gonorrhoea NAAT (PCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>**Clinician-collected  ***Self-collected or Clinician-collected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEMALES AND MALES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SYPHILIS</strong></td>
<td>Blood</td>
<td>Syphilis serology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIV</strong></td>
<td>Blood</td>
<td>HIV Ab/Ag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEPATITIS A</strong></td>
<td>Blood</td>
<td>Anti-HAV Ig-total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEPATITIS B</strong></td>
<td>Blood</td>
<td>HBsAg (Antenatal screening test) Anti-HBs (Acute, chronic or past infection) Anti-HBs (Immunity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEPATITIS C</strong></td>
<td>Blood</td>
<td>HCV Ab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**More information…**

### STEP 3

**Contact tracing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFECTION</th>
<th>HOW FAR BACK TO TRACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHLAMYDIA</strong></td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GONORRHOEA</strong></td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SYPHILIS</strong></td>
<td>Primary syphilis – 3 months plus duration of symptoms Secondary syphilis – 6 months plus duration of symptoms Early latent syphilis – 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIV</strong></td>
<td>Start with recent sexual or injecting drug use needle-sharing partners Outer limit is onset of risk behaviour or last known HIV-negative test result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEPATITIS B</strong></td>
<td>6 months prior to onset of acute symptoms If asymptomatic, according to risk history For newly acquired cases contact your local Public Health Unit (PHU) and/or specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEPATITIS C</strong></td>
<td>6 months prior to onset of acute symptoms If asymptomatic, according to risk history For newly acquired cases contact your local PHU and/or specialist Note: rarely sexually transmitted except in HIV co-infection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRICHOMONIASIS</strong></td>
<td>Unknown; important to treat current partner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**STEP 3 continued…**

**Why contact trace?**
Contact tracing is conducted to prevent your patient from becoming reinfected and to reduce onward transmission of STIs/HIV.

**Whose responsibility is it to contact trace?**
It is the responsibility of the diagnosing doctor to initiate and document a discussion about contact tracing.

**How to contact trace:**

a) Introduce the reasons for contact tracing

“It’s important your partner(s) get treated so you don’t get infected again.”

b) Help identify which partner(s) need to be informed

Use cues such as location or events; use a non-judgemental approach; some people have more than one sexual partner who may require treatment.

“Think back to when and where you had sex recently or any special events.”

c) Explain contact tracing methods and offer choice

- Clinician-initiated contact tracing:
  - Means the diagnosing doctor, practice delegate or external service informs the contact(s) with the index patient’s consent
  - Contact tracing can be performed anonymously or not (depending on the wishes of the patient)
  - Anonymous contact tracing is the best option for HIV or when there are domestic violence concerns

**AND**

Patient-initiated contact tracing:

- Means your patient chooses to inform their own contact(s)
- Discuss with the patient how their contact(s) can be informed

**d) Support your patient to notify their partner(s)**
Provide STI fact sheets, offer contact tracing websites and schedule a follow-up visit/phone call. Assistance could be provided to your patient to access contact tracing websites during the consult.

- [www.letthemknow.org.au](http://www.letthemknow.org.au) Information on STIs and advice for all patients. Online anonymous notification of contacts via SMS, email or letter.
- [www.thedramadownunder.info](http://www.thedramadownunder.info) Information on STIs and advice for MSM. Online anonymous notification of contacts via SMS or email.
- [www.bettertoknow.org.au](http://www.bettertoknow.org.au) Information on STIs and advice for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Online anonymous notification of contacts via SMS or email.
- [www.rypl.positivelife.org.au](http://www.rypl.positivelife.org.au) Mobile app for patients including STI information, partner notification advice and tools.
- [www.endinghiv.org.au/sti/let-them-know](http://www.endinghiv.org.au/sti/let-them-know) Information on STIs and advice for MSM. Online anonymous notification of partners via SMS or email.

For chlamydia, consider use of patient-delivered partner therapy (PDPT) where it is unlikely partners will access testing/treatment.

**e) Document discussions in patient medical record**

**For more resources:** [stipu.nsw.gov.au/gp](http://stipu.nsw.gov.au/gp)

**References:**
1. ASHA (last accessed 07/11/19), Australian STI Management Guidelines
2. ASHM 2018, National hepatitis B testing policy 2016 v1.2
3. The Kirby Institute n.d, Annual Surveillance Reports
5. STIs in Gay Men Action Group 2019, Australian Sexually Transmitted Infection & HIV Testing Guidelines 2019 for asymptomatic men who have sex with men
6. Royal Australian College of General Practitioners 2016, Guidelines for preventive activities in general practice, 9th ed, East Melbourne
8. ASHM 2016, Australasian Contact Tracing Guidelines