

## **SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (STDs)**

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are spread during sexual intercourse or other intimate contact. It is very important that STDs are caught in early stages to avoid serious illness or complications. Always check with your doctor if you suspect you may have an STD. Here is a summary of the early stages of several sexually transmitted diseases.

**AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome):** Early symptoms may include headache, fever, night sweats, weight loss, fatigue, swollen lymph glands, white-coated tongue, diarrhea, and lung infections. AIDS eventually causes death in all cases.

**Candidiasis:** Early symptoms include itching or burning in the genital area, painful urination, and a thick white or light yellow vaginal discharge. It is not as common in males and may indicate a weakened immune system.

**Chlamydia:** Most often without symptoms. Females may have a white vaginal discharge, painful urination, itching, and painful intercourse. Males can have painful urination and penile discharge.

**Genital Herpes:** Symptoms include a cluster of painful blisters in the vaginal area or on the penis, itching or burning in the genital area, painful urination, and a watery vaginal or penile discharge. There may be flu-like symptoms with the first outbreak as well.

**Genital Warts:** Single or clusters of small, soft, cauliflower-looking growths in and around the vagina, anus, penis, groin, and scrotum areas.

**Gonorrhea:** Often no symptoms. A thick penile discharge is often found in males. Females become silent carriers. Rarely, frequent and painful urination, yellow or white vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, pelvic pain and abnormal vaginal bleeding occur.

**Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID):** A yellow or white vaginal discharge with fever and lower abdominal or pelvic pain.

**Syphilis:** Symptoms in early contagious stages may include a painless sore on the genitals, a rash, patches of flaking skin, fever, sore throat, and sores in the mouth or anus.

**Trichomonas:** Vaginal itching, pain and a watery foamy green or yellow discharge, are frequently present. A clear penile discharge is an early sign in the male.

**Cervical Dysplasia:** A pre-cancerous condition of the cervix, this is most likely caused by the virus that causes genital warts. There are no symptoms, unless it is preceded by genital warts.