

STI/HIV Pre-test Answer Key

- 1. You can catch a STI or HIV from door knobs, toilet seats, or drinking fountains. FALSE**

 - STIs are transmitted sexually, requiring sexual contact. Some STIs can be transmitted through skin to skin contact.
 - HIV can be transmitted through exchange of bodily fluids (semen, blood, bodily fluids, and breast milk). This can occur during sexual contact without a condom, as a result of blood transfusion, sharing needles or unhygienic piercing or tattooing practices.

- 2. Statistics show the largest number of people who have STIs are teenagers and young adults. TRUE**

 - In 1999, 24% of all STIs in Calgary occurred in the 15 – 19 year old age group, and 60% occurred in the 15-24 year old age group.
 - In 2004, 70% of all Chlamydia cases were below the age of 24 years. (Alberta Health & Wellness, 2005)
 - Source: CRHA (2000). *Health of the Calgary Region*.

- 3. Syphilis and gonorrhea are the only serious STIs. FALSE**

 - All STIs are serious and should be treated as soon as possible.

- 4. The symptoms of STI/HIV are sometimes not noticed. TRUE**

 - Some STIs have few or no symptoms, or can lay dormant. In the case of chlamydia, the most common reportable STI in Alberta, 70% of females and 50% of males have no symptoms.

- 5. When the symptoms of STIs go away, you don't need to see a doctor. FALSE**

 - No STIs will go away without medical treatment. Symptoms may disappear, but the virus or bacteria continues to cause damage and can also be passed onto someone else.

- 6. You can only have one STI at a time. FALSE**

 - You can have more than one STI at a time.

- 7. There are things you can do to reduce your risk of an STI infection. TRUE**

 - You can abstain from sexual contact, use protective measures such as male or female condoms or dental dams, communicate with your partner, or choose to be mutually monogamous with an uninfected partner or a partner who has had regular check-ups for HIV/STI.

- 8. You have to be 18 years or older to be treated for STI/HIV. FALSE**

 - You can be treated for an STI at any age. You can go to the STD clinic, a Family Planning Clinic, or a doctor.

- 9. Once you've had an STI you can not get that particular STI again. FALSE**

 - STIs can re-occur if you are re-exposed.

- 10. You can not get STI/HIV the first time you have sex. FALSE**

 - You can get an STI or HIV as a result of any sexual contact.

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11. You have to name your sexual contacts when you receive STI/HIV treatment.

- You are strongly encouraged to share the names of sexual contacts if you test positive for an STI or HIV, but are given the option of calling these people yourself or having a doctor or an STI nurse confidentially call them for you.

12. You do not need your parent's consent to be treated for STI/HIV. TRUE

- Information shared between a doctor and a patient is strictly confidential.

13. You can always tell if a person has an STI by looking at their genitals. FALSE

- Some STIs have no visible symptoms. In the case of chlamydia, the most common reportable STI in Alberta, 70% of females and 50% of males have no symptoms.

14. Untreated STIs can cause sterility (inability to become or get someone pregnant). TRUE

- STIs can cause sterility in both males and females.

15. Clean people are not likely to get an STI. FALSE

- Anyone can get an STI. Viruses and bacteria cause STI/HIV. They can exist in a clean environment.
- STI germs can grow in the throat, mouth, genitals or anus, and cannot be eliminated using regular good hygiene.

16. People who chose abstinence will not get an STI. TRUE if...

- If abstinence is defined as eliminating any intimate sexual behaviour involving skin to genital, genital to genital or body fluid to genital contact, then it will prevent STI/HIV. STIs can be passed orally, anally, vaginally, or with genital to skin contact.
- In grade 11, over 55% of students are choosing abstinence.

17. STI/HIV are easy to cure. TRUE and FALSE

- Some STIs are easy to cure with antibiotics, while others are not curable at all.

18. All STI's can be cured. FALSE

- Any STI caused by a virus can only be treated, not cured. The virus will remain in a person's system for life. STIs caused by a virus include genital herpes, HIV/AIDS, and Hepatitis B. In the case of HIV, many years can go by before developing signs of symptoms of AIDS.
- While Hepatitis B cannot be cured, a vaccine is offered in grades 5 and 12 that will reduce one's chances of getting Hepatitis B.
- STI which are caused by a bacteria can be cured with antibiotics.

19. Condoms provide good protection from STI/HIV. TRUE if...

- If condoms are used properly and every time, they can provide good (but not 100% effective) protection from STI/HIV. Condoms need to be latex or polyurethane (not novelty or animal gut).
- Spermicide (non-oxynol 9) can cause skin irritation or itchiness. This may increase the risk for HIV/AIDS.
- Condoms may not totally prevent the transmission of HPV (genital warts) or herpes.

20. Only sexually active adults can get STI/HIV. FALSE

- Anyone, regardless of age, can get STI/HIV if they are sexually active.

21. Only gay people get HIV/AIDS. FALSE

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- Anyone can get HIV/AIDS.

22. STI's can result in a baby being born blind.

TRUE

- Gonorrhoea can pass from mother to child during childbirth and can result in a baby having an eye infection. Syphilis can cause blindness.
- Other STIs can also affect newborns. Genital herpes, HIV and Hepatitis B can also be passed from mother to baby, each of which can have lasting, damaging effects on the baby's health.
- It is important for the pregnant woman to be tested (and treated) to reduce the risks of transmission from mother to baby.

23. You can get HIV/AIDS by touching a person with AIDS.

FALSE

- HIV/AIDS is transmitted when semen, vaginal secretions or blood are exchanged through oral, anal or vaginal sex with a HIV infected person. It is also spread through exposure to HIV infected blood (tattooing, needle sharing or blood transfusion), and an infected mother can pass it to her baby in utero or through her breast milk.

24. Anyone can get STI/HIV.

TRUE

- If a person is sexually active, they can get an STI or HIV.

25. A person with one sex partner is not at risk for STI/HIV.

TRUE/FALSE if...

- True only if both partners have each other as an uninfected sexual partner for life.
- The blood test for HIV can take up to 6 months to show positive. The time between being exposed to the virus and testing positive is called the "window period". During this time the infected person is contagious without knowing it.
- False if your partner has had sex with any other person.

26. You are at greater risk of getting STI/HIV if you have many sexual partners.

TRUE

- The more sexual partners a person has, the more likely it is for that person to get STI/HIV. However, it is possible to get STI/HIV with only one partner.

27. You can get STI/HIV by sharing needles.

TRUE

- Sharing needles places a person at risk for any blood borne disease, such as HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis B.

28. It is safe to have tattoos/piercings done.

TRUE/FALSE if...

- True if the tattoos/piercings are done, using clean and unused needles, by an experienced and reputable tattooing professional.
- False if the tattoos/piercings are done using unsterilized needles or piercing paraphernalia (i.e., piercing parties).

29. Sexual intercourse is the only way to get STI/HIV.

FALSE

- Skin to skin genital contact can transmit STIs caused by virus or parasite. These include syphilis, pubic lice, scabies, HPV and herpes sores.
- HIV and Hepatitis B can be transmitted by contact with body fluids such as blood, semen, vaginal secretions or breast milk (HIV only).

30. The herpes virus causes cold sores.

TRUE

- There are different strains of the herpes virus. Herpes can be contracted through kissing someone with sores or having oral sex with someone who has genital sores.

31. The most common STI in Alberta today is genital herpes.

FALSE

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- Chlamydia is the most common reportable STI in Alberta today.
- Herpes and Genital warts (HPV) are also very common non-reportable diseases. The Centre for Disease Control (2000) estimates that 50-75% of sexually active men and women will acquire genital HPV in their lifetime.¹ HPV often has no symptoms, however it is strongly linked to cervical cancer.

- 32. Early onset of sexual intercourse, exposure to genital warts (HPV) and having more than one sexual partner can put a female at risk for cervical cancer. TRUE**
- Each of these factors can cause cervical cell changes, which put a female at risk for cervical cancer.
- 33. Information shared between a doctor and a patient is confidential. TRUE**
- Doctors cannot share patient information without patient consent.
- 34. In Alberta, the age group that has the highest incidence of chlamydia and gonorrhoea is females aged 15-24. TRUE**
- Source: Alberta Health and Wellness, Disease Control & Prevention (2001).
- 35. Approximately 10% of all STI cases in Calgary occur in the 15 - 19 year old age group. FALSE**
- Almost 25% of STI cases in Calgary occur in the 15 – 19 year old age group.
 - Source: Calgary Health Region 2001.
- 36. It is normal for women to have some vaginal discharge. TRUE**
- All women will have some vaginal discharge. The amount and consistency will vary throughout the menstrual cycle.
- 37. Birth control pills provide protection against STI/HIV. FALSE**
- The birth control pill provides no protection against STI/HIV. It only protects against pregnancy
- 38. If you know your partner, you can't get STI/HIV. FALSE**
- Your partner could have STI/HIV without knowing it, or could be dishonest.
- 39. A sexually active female should see her doctor and get a pap test regularly. TRUE**
- Pap tests check for any cell changes on the cervix. Your doctor will advise you about when to have your pap test repeated. The time may vary.
- 40. If an STI is caused by bacteria, it cannot be cured. FALSE**
- STIs caused by bacteria can be cured with antibiotics.

¹ HPV: Treatment and Prevention Resource – New Opportunities, New Challenges, 2001.