

Mayo Clinic Minute: Reducing the risks of sexually transmitted infections

Sexually transmitted infections continue to rise in the U.S and around the globe. The World Health Organization [reports](#) more than 1 million new sexually transmitted infections are acquired a day — with the majority of them asymptomatic.

Dr. Stacey Rizza, an infectious diseases physician with Mayo Clinic, says there are many reasons for the continued rise in sexually transmitted infections in the last few years. She says educating people is crucial and an important step in reducing the risks of sexually transmitted infections, which can have long-lasting health effects on the individual as well as society.

Video	Audio
Stacey Rizza, M.D. Infectious Diseases Mayo Clinic	"We've seen the rate of many sexually transmitted infections going up in the last few years, particularly syphilis."
	Syphilis, like chlamydia and gonorrhea, are bacterial infections and can be treated with antibiotics.
	These medications won't help viral infections, like hepatitis B, HIV and herpes.
	And not everyone with a sexually transmitted infection will have symptoms.
Stacey Rizza, M.D. Infectious Diseases Mayo Clinic	"That's part of the difficulty of getting on top of the transmission is some people are asymptomatic, and they're able to transmit it to others."
	Dr. Stacey Rizza says screening, understanding risk factors and prevention are crucial.
Stacey Rizza, M.D. Infectious Diseases Mayo Clinic	"The best way to prevent most sexually transmitted infections is with barrier protection during intercourse."
	Meaning condoms or female dental dams, for instance. For those at risk of HIV, there is medication referred to as PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, and vaccines to prevent HPV and hepatitis B.
	Dr. Rizza says protecting yourself also means protecting others.
Stacey Rizza, M.D. Infectious Diseases Mayo Clinic	"If you have a new sex partner or if you have multiple sex partners, then we usually recommend getting tested every three months, even if you're asymptomatic."
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