

## About Marie Stopes International

Marie Stopes International is a specialist reproductive healthcare organisation and a registered charity, working in both the UK and overseas.

Our nine main UK centres help over 100,000 women and men each year with sexual health... but the good work does not stop here.

Any financial surplus generated in the UK helps us provide reproductive healthcare services to women and their families in some of the poorest communities in the world.

The organisation campaigns for better awareness of sexual health issues and open access to services for everyone. Our aim is to provide a high quality service, tailored to individual need. Whichever service you require, we offer convenient appointments and experienced teams who are supportive and professional.

# sexual health screening

## information and services



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MARIE STOPES  
INTERNATIONAL

# sexually transmitted infections

Sexually transmitted infections (STI's) are extremely common and can affect anyone. You will not always know whether you have an infection as often there are no symptoms.

At Marie Stopes International we encourage all those who are sexually active to have regular check ups as most sexually transmitted infections are very easily treated and a regular check up can offer you reassurance and peace of mind.

## How are sexually transmitted infections passed on?

Bacteria and viruses that cause STI's can be found in semen, vaginal fluids and blood and the most common areas of the body infected are the genital and anal areas, and throat.

STI's are most commonly passed on through unprotected sex with an infected partner, sharing needles with infected people and through child birth, where a mother can pass the infection on.

## What are the infections?

Think about the following questions:

- Are you sexually active?
- Have you had more than one sexual partner?
- Has your partner had more than one sexual partner?

If you answered yes to any of those questions then you are at risk. Everyone who has sex is at risk of an STI.

The most common STI's include chlamydia, gonorrhoea, herpes, trichomonas vaginalis, syphilis, hepatitis A, B and C and HIV. At Marie Stopes International women can also be tested for common vaginal infections such as thrush and bacterial vaginosis.

Cervical screening is also available at Marie Stopes International, using the most up to date and reliable method, liquid cytology. Please ask at the centre if you would like further information.

## How will I know if I have an STI?

Although many people will have no symptoms, you should definitely be tested if you have:

- Unusual genital/anal discharge
- Genital sores, growths or lumps
- Pain when passing urine
- Painful sex or bleeding after sex
- Pain in the lower abdomen
- Genital pain

For women, an indication of an infection may be bleeding in between periods.

The symptoms of an STI may come and go; this does not mean that the infection has gone. It is still important to be tested as having one STI can make you more vulnerable to others.

The risks of not being tested and treated for STI's can vary from pelvic pain, ectopic pregnancy, infertility in both men & women, and in extremely rare cases chronic debilitating secondary infections.

### What do the tests involve?

**At Marie Stopes International you will have a private consultation with a specialist nurse who will discuss your concerns and recommend any tests. Tests for STI's are usually by a urine sample, genital swab and in some instances, a blood test.**

## Fees

Our STI service is private. To find out more about our fees call us on 0845 300 8090.

## Results

The results of any tests are usually available within 72 hours of your appointment, with some results available on the day of your appointment. Cervical screening results can take up to five days.

Results are available by text, email, letter or phone depending on your preference. You may also choose to return to the centre to collect your results.

## Treatment

Most STI's are easily treated with a course of antibiotics; if you require any further treatment we will advise you at the time of you receiving your results.

## Your partner needs treating too

If you have an STI your partner almost certainly will too. They must also get tested to make sure, and seek treatment if necessary. Your partner can also be tested at Marie Stopes International.

Many people are worried or embarrassed about talking to their partner about a sexually transmitted infection, but as some infections are very common either of you could have been infected before you met. If your partner does not get tested and seek treatment, you may become infected again.

## How to book an appointment

STI testing and treatment is currently available at our Marie Stopes South London Centre.

For more information and to book an appointment call **0845 300 8090** 24 hours.

An appointment will usually be made for you within 48 hours of you contacting us.