

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (STDs)

- Diseases or infections which are transmitted through sexual intercourse are collectively called sexually transmitted diseases (STD) or venereal diseases (VD) or reproductive tract infections (RTI). Gonorrhoea, syphilis, genital herpes, chlamydiasis, genital warts, trichomoniasis, hepatitis-B and of course, the most discussed infection in the recent years, HIV leading to AIDS are some of the common STDs. Among these, HIV infection is most dangerous
- Some of these infections like hepatitis-B and HIV can also be transmitted by sharing of injection needles, surgical instruments, etc., with infected persons, transfusion of blood, or from an infected mother to the foetus too.
- Except for hepatitis-B, genital herpes and HIV infections, other diseases are completely curable if detected early and treated properly.
- Early symptoms of most of these are minor and include itching, fluid discharge, slight pain, swellings, etc., in the genital region. Infected females may often be asymptomatic and hence, may remain undetected for long.
- Absence or less significant symptoms in the early stages of infection and the social stigma attached to the STDs, deter the infected persons from going for timely detection and proper treatment. This could lead to complications later, which include pelvic inflammatory diseases (PID), abortions, still births, ectopic pregnancies, infertility or even cancer of the reproductive tract.
- STDs are a major threat to a healthy society. Therefore, prevention or early detection and cure of these diseases are given prime consideration under the reproductive health-care programmes. Though all persons are vulnerable to these infections, their incidences are reported to be very high among persons in the age group of 15-24 years

Preventive Measures :

- Avoid sex with unknown partners/multiple partners.
- Always use condoms during coitus.
- In case of doubt, go to a qualified doctor for early detection and get complete treatment if diagnosed with disease.