

STDs-Health Class HS

Time: 55 minutes

Materials: Red/Green papers, scratch paper, urine cup, clipboard

End Understanding

I can know how STI's are transmitted and if they are curable or treatable. I know the steps of getting tested. I can have open communication.

Assessments

- True/false myths
- Steps of testing
- Open communication

Set-up: Distribute one red, one green card and blank scratch paper to each student in class. Leave stacks at tables if students have not yet arrived.

❖ 1) Preventing and Treating Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Introduce Topic:

“Today, we’ll be talking about sexually transmitted diseases/infections, or STI/Ds. We know that STDs are common, and some of us are likely struggling with the issue of STDs, either personally, or from a relationship, or knowing that a family member has been impacted. STD and STI's will be interchangeable-infections are treatable, disease may be lifelong.

Next class, we will cover abstinence and birth control.

As we work through both topics, I will be using male/female as related to your sex at birth.

The goal is not to make people feel uncomfortable, but provide facts about this topic. Questions are welcome. On each desk is a red and green card and a scratch paper. The red and green is for a true/false activity we are going to do.

❖ 2) Anonymous Questions

The scratch paper is for you to ask questions anonymously.

To keep this anonymous, Let's go over some guidelines. First, everyone needs to write something on your slip of paper. If you don't have a question, give us some feedback about the presentation. Please do not write your name down. When you're done, fold your paper in half. I will collect them and we will go over them at the end or tomorrow depending on our time.

❖ **3) True False**

QUICK ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE (5 minutes)

“We are going to do a quick check in about your knowledge of STD’s. I am going to read statements that are either true or false. If you think the statement is true please hold up a green card, so we can all see what everyone visually thinks. If you think the statement is false, please hold up a red card” (show True and False again so everyone is clear)

Now read the statements below. Follow up each statement with any relevant medical information:

Starting with something easy

- Pineapple is a delicious topping on pizza.
- About STDs, “Surely I would know if I had something.” (False)
 - Often, STDs won’t have any symptoms.
- Some STD’s are treatable, others are curable (True)
- The birth control pill prevents pregnancy and provides protection against STD’s (False)
 - Hormonal birth control, like the pill or the implant, do not provide any protection against STDs.
- Using a latex barrier like a condom makes sexual contact less risky. (True)
 - Barriers, like condoms or dental dams reduce the risk of STD transmission during sexual contact
- Delaying sex; avoiding oral, anal, or vaginal sex is the most effective prevention. (True)
 - This is called abstinence, which is only 100% effective at preventing STDs and pregnancy
- Very few adults have been exposed to STD’s (False)
 - Most sexually active adults have been exposed to STDs.
- Last one: Talking openly about this topic may help to prevent STD’s and help those who need to seek medical care. (True)

There is a lot of unnecessary stigma around STDs, which often leads to misinformation. Talking openly about STDs will help people feel more comfortable preventing STDs, getting tested, and receiving treatment.

“Are there any questions you have about the statements we just went through? “

❖ **4) The Two Modes of STD Transmission**

“STD’s are fairly common. No one intends to get a virus or bacteria, but it does happen, quite frequently actually.

Let's talk about the two main ways STDs are transmitted:

~Slide motion~

>There is Skin to skin transmission and Body Fluids transmission

~Slide motion~

The first way is through skin to skin transmission. If >infected skin comes in contact with susceptible skin, transmission can occur. The part of the body we are talking about for "infected skin" is the "boxer short" region, or around the genitals. >Susceptible skin includes the areas around the genitals and the mouth.

This means if someone has an STD and they shake someone's hand, they CANNOT pass it. But any mouth to genital contact or genital to genital contact CAN pass an infection. This means it is possible to transmit some STDs without having intercourse.

~Slide motion~

>The second way to transmit an STD is if infected body fluids enter another person's body. The body fluids that can pass an STD are pre-ejaculatory fluid, semen, vaginal fluids, rectal fluid, and blood. In the case of HIV, breast milk can also transmit the virus. If infected body fluids enter another person's body, they are at risk for infection. This usually happens during vaginal, oral, or anal sex.

❖ 5) STD Transmission

There are many different STDs. We are going to review 10 of the most common ones.

On the left are the four that can be transmitted through skin to skin contact. Remember that the area of the body we're talking about during skin-to-skin transmission is in the boxer short region.

~Slide motion~

- Pubic lice: parasite, which is sometimes called crabs, blood sucking insects, causes itching, found in the boxer area as well as other areas with hair, including bedding and clothes.
trx-prescription cream- condoms don't prevent spread
- Herpes: virus, several variations of this virus, sores on mouth or genital area, may cause flu like symptoms, no cure, medication helps with symptoms and reduced outbreaks- condom doesn't prevent spread
- Human PapillomaVirus: virus, may cause Genital Warts and Cancer in males and females, may not have symptoms, vaccination to help prevent (11-12 yo or older)

- Syphilis: bacterial, several stages, initially get sores that go away, then rash on hands and feet with flu symptoms, late stages of dementia, blindness, paralysis, Trx-curable at every stage with antibiotic but damage is not reversible. (ER example)

The STDS that are transmitted through body fluids are:

- Chlamydia/Gonorrhea: bacteria, Very common, no symptoms, may have itching and burning pain or discharge, Trx-antibiotics for both partners
- Trichomoniasis: parasite, males-discharge and painful urination, maybe no symptoms, females-increased discharge with strong odor, itching burning. Trx- antibiotics for both partners
- Hepatitis B/Hepatitis C: virus, Possibly no symptoms, flu like symptoms, dark urine, yellow or jaundice skin. Trx- Hep B has vaccines for prevention, antiviral medications to prevent worsening symptoms.
- HIV (which is the virus that causes AIDS): attacks the immune system, May not notice early symptoms or flu like, no cure. Trx- antivirals help, can progress to AIDs

We have talked about how STi's are transmitted. This next slide is going to show what the rate of transmission can look like.

❖ 6) Exposure

This diagram shows you how sexually active people can have high rates of STIs.

For every partner someone has, they may be exposed to multiple partners through current or past sexual activity.

How do you think you would start a conversation with a partner? Next we will talk through it.

❖ 7) OPEN COMMUNICATION...

Open and direct communication is key for all healthy relationships, and can be essential in preventing STD transmission. Sometimes people are really anxious or nervous about having this conversation, but not being able to have a conversation before sexual contact can be a sign that a person isn't ready to be sexually active!

Here are a few tips to make the conversation easier

Know what you want from the conversation: Talk about testing? Using condoms/abstinence? STD history?

If you think it will be hard to talk, figure out why. Are you just embarrassed or shy? Or is it something more? Thinking about what makes it hard for you to talk about STDs can help you prepare.

Plan what to say. Good planning can make a hard talk easier. Writing down the most important points so you don't miss anything. Bring your notes with you in case you forget what you wanted to say. You also can prepare by looking up nearby places to get tested.

Pick a good time to talk. Find a quiet space where you can chat without being interrupted.

Start the conversation (someone has to do it!). Bring up the topic in a matter-of-fact way.

See how your partner responds. After you introduce the topic, pause to hear what your partner says. (If there's no response, be direct and ask what they think.)

Say you'd like to go together to get tested. You can look up where to go.

Listen to your partner's point of view. Being a good listener shows respect. What at first might seem like a resistance to getting tested for STDs could turn out to be a worry over what it might cost.

Be calm and present your case in a factual way. Taking a "just the facts" approach can help you avoid sounding like you're judging or accusing.

It's normal to be nervous when you first start talking about something like STDs. But you'll get past your nerves the more you talk and listen. Having the STD conversation can be awkward at first. But it's a lot less uncomfortable than discovering you have an STD after you have sex — or finding out that you gave one to your partner.

I am going to read through some ideas for how to start a conversation about STDs with a partner. If you think the statement is a good idea, hold up your green card, and if you think it's not-so-great, hold up your red card.

Pause after each one for audience to vote:

1. Talking on phone: "Hi, um, oh, no reason really, but, um, how much do you know much about virus's..." RED
2. Texting on phone: "Hey. I've got something to talk with you about that is private. Do you have time this evening that's good to chat?" GREEN
3. Talking to friend in the hall: "STD's!!!!!!" RED
4. Talking to partner at school: "Look, I know this is awkward, but I respect you enough to talk with you about something that is important for our health..." GREEN
5. Texting on phone: "I've heard some things about you, so before we hook up, I'm gonna need to see your test results....." RED
6. Talking on phone: "I want to make sure we're starting things off right, so before things go any further, would you be willing to get tested with me?..." GREEN

When talking about STDs, the best approach is to be direct and respectful. In general, think about how you would like to be approached.

Practice first—it can really help with the conversation. Everyone realizes that it takes a certain level of courage and maturity to initiate this conversation. It's always better to just be real.

“Next we are going to talk about testing.

❖ **8) STD Testing STEP 1: Get there!**

Remember, STDs are common. So, what do people do if they are experiencing any symptoms or someone had unprotected sex and needs to get a test?

There are 4 steps of STD testing. Step One: Get there!

Step 1: Getting there!

For some people, the hardest part of the whole test is just getting to a clinic. Finding out where one is, knowing how to get there, and having enough courage to make the appointment are all important parts of this. But, you deserve the best in taking care of your health. If you have a friend who is nervous about it, you can go in with them.

Confidentiality- your privacy is important. Healthcare providers must keep your privacy. The only time we have to say something is if your safety or someone else's safety is a concern. Make sure to ask questions when you call for an appointment to discuss how to be seen and keep the visit confidential. Just know that talking to a parent long before is much easier than to have to do at the time you are concerned. Keep that in mind as we talk through this.

A lot of people worry about paying for testing. Thankfully, many clinics offer free or low-cost testing. Be sure to ask when you make your appointment!

❖ **9) STD Testing STEP 2: The Questions!**

Chair 2: The Questions!

Bring an ID with you.

(show clipboard with paperwork)

When you get to the clinic, you will most likely wait in a waiting room. You may be asked to fill out some paperwork. Some of these questions are standard questions about your medical history. You may even be asked personal questions, about symptoms you may be experiencing, or if you have engaged in oral, anal, or vaginal sex. This information is strictly confidential and is meant to

help the practitioner know what risk you may have. It's important to answer honestly so they can treat you.

❖ **10) STD Testing STEP 3: The Tests!**

Chair 3: The Tests!

There are many types of tests and sometimes multiple ways a medical provider can determine if someone has been exposed to an STD. But believe it or not, for the most common infections, like gonorrhea and chlamydia, the test is as simple as peeing in a cup! (show the urine sample cup). This urine is tested and can reveal the presence of different bacteria. There is also now a simple mouth swab for HIV. Others require a blood test. Sometimes a physical exam is necessary, which may include a pelvic exam. This is where a clinician would insert something called a speculum into the vagina, to be able to see the cervix, and then swab the cervix.

❖ **11) STD Testing STEP 4: The Results!**

Chair 4: The results!

Depending on what is happening, some results are available during the visit. An HIV rapid test is ready in 20 minutes. Other test results may take 3-5 days. The clinic will call or text to confirm the results. If a bacterial STD is discovered, antibiotics can be given. If a viral STD is discovered, the clinic will discuss beginning treatment. It is very important that if you have an STD that your partner is also treated so that it is not passed back and forth. That is why open communication is important with your partner.

❖ **12) Curable or Treatable?**

Many folks wonder which STDs are curable and which are treatable. We covered some of that earlier. The STDs on the left are curable. When a person tests positive for one of those infections, their doctor will give them medication to eliminate the STD. However, if those STDs go untreated, they can cause irreversible health impacts.

The STDs on the right are treatable, but not curable. That means that when a person tests positive for one of those infections, medication can help alleviate some of the symptoms of the virus, and reduce the risk of transmitting it to their partners, but there is no cure.

❖ **13) Some solid reasons to get tested...**

There are lots of solid reasons to get tested... Here are a few:

- *You deserve to know!*
- *Your partners deserve to know!*

- *Many STDs have no symptoms, so it may be the only way to know*
- *It is easy, painless, and safe*
- *It can be confidential*
- *If you do test positive, you can receive timely and more effective treatment*

❖ **14) Many ways to prevent and reduce risk...**

REDUCING THE RISK (3 minutes)

Getting tested is an important part of preventing STDs. There are many ways to reduce the risk of STD transmission: What other ideas do you all have? (affirm and repeat answers – ask questions to understand if necessary, or if someone says something incorrect/disrespectful, turn it into a learning moment)

~Slide motion~

>Here are some more ideas...

- *Abstain or delay sex*
- *Use barrier methods (condoms, dental dams)*
- *Limit number of sexual partners*
- *Get vaccinated*
- *Increase knowledge*
- *Get tested (at least yearly if sexually active and more frequent if new or multiple partners.*
- *And last, we have talk openly and honestly*

❖ **15) Resources**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (2 minutes)

Some resources to close out our presentation...

Locally, we have SCPD, Family Health Service in Bellevue, St Luke's. Talk with them about their costs and their confidentiality policies as each one is a little different depending on your age.

On the left are some places in our community to get tested, and on the right are some reliable resources for more information about STDs, testing, and conversation tips about STDs. Feel free to take a photo of this slide for future reference, or to share with a friend.

❖ 16) Questions

Answer anonymous questions on papers if time or second day

Affirm the asker (“I am glad someone asked this...” / “This question really made me think...” / etc. Be genuine!)

Note that the question is values-based

State the facts

What is the range of values/beliefs about this in the community?

Encourage talking to loved ones and trusted adults

Refer to relevant resources & check that you answered the question

How to answer questions:

<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/locations/family-planning/education/FLASH/sexual-health-questions.aspx>

Personal Questions

Strategies:

- Validate personal questions, just like other student questions. Be cautious about inadvertently embarrassing or shaming students for asking personal questions.
- Use personal questions as an opportunity to model and teach about healthy boundaries.
- Do not share information about your sexual experiences or history. Sometimes teachers want to share this information to set a positive example or to share a cautionary story. Even though the intent is good, it is still inappropriate to share with students. It is also less helpful to students than one might hope.
- When you decline to answer a question about yourself, follow these steps: (1) affirm that students are often curious about the adults in their life; (2) reframe the question, so that it is general, not personal; and (3) answer with factual information and/or the

values question protocol.

- When students ask a written questions about themselves or someone else, paraphrase the question to the third person. Answer the question about people in general, not this specific person.
- When students ask questions out loud about themselves or someone else, remind the class about respecting people's privacy, and answer the question about people in general, not this specific person.

Technique Questions

Strategies:

- Validate questions worded in this way, just as you would all other types of question.
- Reframe technique questions as factual questions. Answer the factual aspect of the question.
- If you think the question is really asking for information on how to perform sexual acts, let the class know that teachers, school nurses, etc. don't give sex advice. Instead, use the student's question as an opportunity to give accurate information about the topic in general.

Slang Questions

Strategies:

- Validate questions with slang, just as you would all other types of student questions.
- When reading a written question aloud, read the question verbatim. Identify the slang as such, in a non-judgmental way, and translate it into medical/standard language. Let the class know we'll all be using the medical/standard term in class.
- Assume good intent on the part of your students. Students typically use the language they have been exposed to, including by family members. Don't denigrate students for using slang; simply instruct the class to use the medical/standard term in health class.
- Handle slang as a learning opportunity, in your regular calm and respectful manner. This greatly reduces students need to test or shock you.
- Your answer might include the values question protocol.
- Let your administrator know, in advance, how you handle slang in your classroom.
- Slurs fall into a different category than slang. If students use a slur in sexual health class (e.g. for women, people who are gay, etc.), use the following steps: (1) validate question by saying you're glad this important topic came up; (2) identify the term as an offensive word; (3) let the class know we won't be using this word in school, ever,

because it is hurtful. It is helpful to proceed as though the speaker didn't mean harm because it will help them save face and more readily adopt more respectful language.

Value based

When value question contain non-universal values, the value question protocol provides the structure for handling these questions in a respectful and inclusive manner.

1. **Validate the student for asking the question.**

Some examples include: "That's a really important question;" "A lot of people have that question;" "I am so glad this question came up;" "What a thoughtful question."

2. **Identify the question as a belief or value question.**

"This is not a question that there is just one answer to. People have a lot of different beliefs about this topic."

3. **Answer the factual part of the question.**

"Yes. It is legal in the U.S. to get an abortion, regardless of whether someone has been raped or not."

4. **Describe the range of beliefs.**

"Abortion is a topic that people have a lot of different beliefs about. Some people think that abortion is never okay, under any circumstances. Some people think that abortion can be a responsible decision if a woman is not ready to be pregnant. Some people believe that abortion is okay under certain circumstances, like if a woman was raped or if she is using drugs. What are some things you have heard that people believe about when it is or is not ok to have an abortion?"

5. **Refer the student to family, clergy, or other adult who is like family.**

"Since people have such different beliefs about this topic, I would suggest you talk to your family, or another adult who is like family, to find out what they think."

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/the-talk.html?scrlybrkr=0a819c99>