



Québec 

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An STIBBI Has Come Between Us – Let's Talk About It

Finding out you have an STIBBI (sexually transmitted and blood-borne infection) is never pleasant. There's no point in being angry with yourself or accusing your sexual partners. People who spread the infection are often unaware that they are infected.

To keep the infection from spreading, inform your partners. This brochure tells you what to do if you find out you have **chlamydia**, **gonorrhea**, **syphilis** or **HIV**. It also gives you tips on how to notify your partners.

● ● What to do if you have chlamydia, gonorrhea or syphilis

- Find out about the infection.
- Take the medication as prescribed.
- Wait until you're cured before having sex.
- Notify your partners quickly to
 - › reduce your risk of getting chlamydia, gonorrhea or syphilis again. Even if you're cured, you can get the infection again from an untreated partner;
 - › enable them to get treated quickly and avoid health problems such as infertility (can't have kids, for chlamydia or gonorrhea); a blood infection (for gonorrhea); and serious damage to the heart or brain (for syphilis);
 - › help them avoid spreading the infection to other people.

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Masculine pronouns are used generically in this document.

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↓ YOU HAVE	NOTIFY YOUR PARTNERS OF THE PAST	TAKE THE MEDICATION	DON'T HAVE SEX UNTIL YOU'RE CURED	WAIT UNTIL YOUR PARTNERS HAVE BEEN TREATED BEFORE HAVING SEX WITH THEM
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● CHLAMYDIA OR GONORRHEA →	two months	Single dose (one or several pills taken all at once) ● or Pills taken for several days	Single dose: Wait seven days after the treatment ● or Pills taken for several days: Wait until you've finished the treatment	Single dose: Wait seven days after your partners have had the treatment ● or Pills taken for several days: Wait until your partners have finished the treatment
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● SYPHILIS →	STAGE 1 One or several painless sores	four months	Injections given at the same time by a health professional Follow-up appointment with a health professional who will check if the treatment has cured the infection	Injections given at the same time: Wait seven days after the injections	As per the health professional's recommendations
	STAGE 2 Symptoms similar to those of the flu, rash	eight months	● or Pills taken for several days (in case of allergy to treatment given by injection)	● or Pills taken for several days: Wait until you've finished the treatment	
	EARLY LATENT STAGE No symptoms, infection contracted during the past year	one year	Follow-up appointment with a health professional who will check if the treatment has cured the infection		
	OTHER STAGES	As per the health professional's recommendations	As per the health professional's recommendations	As per the health professional's recommendations	

● ● CHLAMYDIA, GONORRHEA OR SYPHILIS →	If you haven't had a sexual partner during the period indicated, notify your most recent partner.	Treatment is free for you and your partners	Additionally, wait until all your symptoms have disappeared before having sex. Wait until your partners' symptoms have all disappeared before having sex with them. If you can't avoid having sex, always use a condom when you have vaginal or anal sex. Use a condom or a piece of latex when you have oral sex. See a health professional again if symptoms persist or reappear.
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● What to do if you have an HIV infection

- Find out about HIV (see the websites at the back of the brochure and the information on the back of the notification card). See also
 - › Portail VIH/sida du Québec: 514-523-4636 or 1-877-767-8245 (toll free), info@pvsq.org
www.pvsq.org;
 - › CATIE (Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange): 1-800-263-1638 (toll free),
www.catie.ca.
- See a doctor. The doctor can
 - › answer your questions;
 - › advise you about a plan for medical follow-up and treatment;
 - › tell you about resources that can be helpful to you.
- Follow the doctor's recommendations. When indicated, take the medication (antiretrovirals) as prescribed. Treatment is covered by Québec's Public Prescription Drug Insurance Plan or by private insurance companies.
- Protect yourself and your partners by using
 - › either a condom for all vaginal and anal sex, or a condom or a piece of latex for oral sex;
 - › new preparation, injection and inhalation equipment, if you take drugs. Don't share your drug preparation, injection or inhalation equipment.
- Ask a nurse or doctor about ways to reduce the risk of transmission.

- Quickly notify your current partners and those you've had since the last time you had a negative HIV screening test, or since you've started having risky behaviours. Those are the people with whom you've
 - › had oral, vaginal or anal sex;
 - › shared drug injection or inhalation equipment.When you notify your partners, they can
 - › have a screening test and get assessed quickly, and avoid serious health problems;
 - › avoid spreading the infection to other people.
- Talk with a nurse or a doctor about the duty to disclose your HIV status to your sexual partners, or contact VIH info droits, a legal information and advice service provided by Coalition des organismes communautaires québécois de lutte contre le sida:
 - › In Montréal: 514-844-2477, ext. 34;
 - › Outside Montréal (toll free): 1-866-535-0481, ext. 34;
 - › vih-infodroits@cocqsida.com.

●●● Notify my partners. Ok, but how?

Most partners react well and appreciate being informed.

Most partners prefer being informed in person or by telephone. Here are a few tips:

- Before you meet with or call the person, think about what you will say to him or her;
- Choose a time when your partner can give you all his or her attention;
- If you tell your partner by phone, make sure that it's a good time to talk for both of you;
- If you tell your partner in person, choose a neutral place that is quiet and safe, where you can talk without being interrupted;
- Say things simply and clearly:
 - › the name of the infection you have;
 - › that a person can have the infection even if there are no symptoms;
 - › that it's important to see a doctor (or a nurse) quickly to have a screening test, get assessed or get treated.

For example

"I have chlamydia. It's a sexually transmitted infection. It's treated with antibiotics and treatment is free. You might have this infection even if you don't have symptoms. It's important that you see a doctor or a nurse quickly to have a screening test and get treated. If chlamydia isn't treated it can cause serious health problems."

"I have HIV. It is a sexually transmitted and blood-borne infection. You might have this infection even if you don't have symptoms. It's important that you see a doctor or a nurse to have a screening test and get evaluated. HIV can cause serious health problems."

- Tell your partner to visit the website sante.gouv.qc.ca (for the general public) or itss.gouv.qc.ca (for young people) to find out more about chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis or HIV.
- Give your partner a notification card (a doctor, nurse or other health care provider can give you some). On the card you'll find information about the infection as well as how to contact the 811 Info-Santé service and useful websites.
- Encourage your partner to see a doctor or a nurse, or to contact Info-Santé at 811.

By informing my partners,
I'm acting responsibly

If you're uncomfortable talking to your partner, you can send a notification card, email or letter that you can sign or send anonymously. Ask yourself if it's the best way to inform this person. If there's a risk that someone else might read the card, email or letter, it's better to find another way to tell your partner.

Talk it over with a friend, nurse, health care provider or doctor to decide on the best way to notify your partners. They can help you prepare to notify your partners.

I don't want to talk to my partners directly. Who can help?

In some cases, health professionals can notify your partners for you, without identifying you. This service is confidential and free. Talk to a doctor or a nurse, or call Info-Santé at 811.

How to avoid getting another sexually transmitted and blood-borne infection

- Use a condom every time when you have oral, vaginal or anal sex.
- Use a piece of latex every time you have oral sex, to cover the vulva or anus and avoid direct contact with the mouth. A piece of latex can be cut out from a latex glove or a non-lubricated latex condom.
- If you share sex toys, cover them with a condom and use a new condom for each partner.
- If you use drugs, always use new preparation, injection and inhalation equipment. Don't share your drug preparation, injection or inhalation equipment.

If you have risky behaviours, get tested regularly.

For more information about STBBI:

- › itss.gouv.qc.ca/accueil_en.dhtml (for youth);
- › sante.gouv.qc.ca/en/ (for the general public).

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**Santé
et Services sociaux**

Québec

