

What happens at a typical STI screening appointment?

At a typical appointment, the doctors will first ask about any risk of infection you may have had (including your sexual history) or any symptoms you may have had. Don't worry, the clinics are used to dealing with these issues; you won't have anything they haven't seen before. If you have symptoms, then you will have a physical examination in which the doctors will check the potential infected areas. You will also have a series of blood tests that are used to test for HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and syphilis. Swabs, which are large cotton buds rubbed over parts of the body, are used to examine material from an infected area or discharge. Usually an urine sample is used to test for chlamydia. Testing usually takes thirty minutes but can take up to two hours depending on the waiting time.

When will I receive my results?

This differs between clinics. Some results might be available on the same day, such as a basic HIV blood test in the clinic while others, such as chlamydia, gonorrhoea, hepatitis A, B, and C can take anywhere from one to four weeks.



What happens if I receive a positive result?

Depending on the clinic, you may receive a follow-up appointment. For all the free clinics listed, free counseling is available along with free short-term treatment. The clinics may also refer you to a hospital to see a specialist. If you attended a private clinic you might be asked to pay for the follow-up appointment. Please check with the clinic for more information.



How can I prevent myself from getting STIs?

You can prevent yourself from getting STIs in several different ways:

- *Use protection:* Using a condom reduces the spread of STIs.
- *Stay with one partner:* Staying with one partner who is uninfected reduces the spread of STIs.
- *Get vaccinated:* Vaccines are safe, effective, and recommended to prevent HPV (human papilloma virus) and hepatitis B. HSE provides HPV vaccines to girls at 1st year secondary level.
- *Wash afterwards:* Wash before and after sex. Avoid sharing towels or other fluids.

Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication, no guarantee can be given that all errors and omissions have been excluded.

Sexual Health Services in Ireland

Knowing Your Status Through STI Testing



Cairde
Challenging ethnic minority health inequalities

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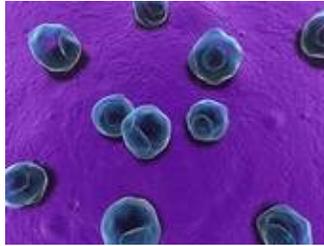
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STI TESTING SERVICES IN IRELAND

What is an STI?

STIs are sexually transmitted infections that are passed on from one person to another through sexual contact and



sometimes by genital contact. Each is spread differently and can be transmitted unknowingly since many STIs don't have symptoms. Some common STIs include chlamydia, gonorrhoea, genital warts, HIV/AIDs, HPV (human papilloma virus), hepatitis B, and hepatitis C.

Why should I get tested?

It is important to get tested because some STIs do not have symptoms. If untreated some STIs can cause long term problems such as infertility, complications in pregnancy, pelvic inflammatory disease, organ damage, and even death. STIs can produce a wide range of symptoms, including unusual discharge from the penis, anus, or vagina, pain when urinating, unusual sores, ulcers, or blisters in the genital area, discomfort or pain in the anus/rectum, pain during sex, bleeding between periods or after sex, and swollen testicles.



Where can I get free testing?

The following clinics, located in Dublin, are **free** and **confidential**, meaning that nobody will be informed of your attendance or aware of your results at the clinic without your knowledge. You do not need a GP referral.



St. James Hospital (Tel: 01 4162315/4162316)
GUIDE Clinic, James's Street, Dublin 8
Complete STI testing, interpreter service, free hepatitis vaccinations, 18 & younger from 10am on Thursday

Gay Men's Health Service: Baggot Hospital
(Tel: 016699553)
18 Upr Baggot St, Dublin 4
Complete STI testing, interpreter service & free hepatitis vaccinations

Mater Misericordiae Hospital (Tel: 01 8032063)
Infectious Diseases Unit, Eccles Street, Dublin
Complete STI testing, interpreter service, free hepatitis vaccinations, 16& older can get tested

Women's Health Project for women working in prostitution (Tel: 3531 6699515)
WHP Clinical Services, Baggot St Clinic
Complete STI testing, interpreter service, community welfare officer available

Dublin AIDS Alliance (Tel: 01 873 3799)
53 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1
HIV testing only

Beaumont Hospital (Tel: 01 809 3006)
Beaumont Road, Dublin 9
HIV testing only, interpreter service

Are STI testing services covered by the medical card/GP card?

Unfortunately, no. Some clinics, however, may provide STI screening service at a discounted price with a medical card.

What if I'm a student?

Consultations are free or subsidized by the college. Please check with your college for more information.



Can I get tested at a GP office or at a private clinic?

Yes. You can ask your GP for STI testing or you can go to a private clinic. Since these are not publicly funded services they may require payment.

Can I get tested at home?

Yes. The Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA) and LloydsOnlineDoctor allow you to send your samples to the lab and receive your results online. You can order a standard sexual health testing kit for chlamydia and gonorrhoea or an enhanced sexual health testing kit for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, and HIV for a standard price from the following website: <http://www.ifpa.ie/Sexual-Health-Services/STI-Services/Home-STI-Tests>

Where else can I get tested?

You can get tested at women health clinics, men health clinics, and at IFPA clinics for a price. If you have a medical card you may receive a discount. Please check with the clinic for more information