

How much do you know?

BACKGROUND

This activity is designed to check student knowledge of STIs as well as provide an introduction to the bio-medical aspects of STIs. The activity aims to enable students to compare their class knowledge to the most recent survey of student knowledge in Australia.

As the data shows young people have a good knowledge of HIV however knowledge of other sexually transmissible infections and blood borne viruses is poor. It is not enough to assume that knowledge of HIV transmission can be applied to other STIs and blood-borne viruses such as hepatitis. There are important differences between HIV and other infections which need to be understood and acted on by young people as in the main these pose a greater threat to the health of young people than HIV and carry life long consequences.

Depending on the school, it may be possible to negotiate with the mathematics department to complete part of this activity. You will need a calculator to work out percentages.



WHOLE CLASS ACTIVITY

90-100

TIME REQUIRED (MINS)

PREPARATION

Photocopy worksheet sexual health questionnaire so that all students have a copy

Put the Australian data on an overhead transparency. It may be possible able to get hold of state or territory data by contacting the education department and asking for the policy officer responsible for STIs, HIV/AIDS and BBVs education (see appendix). This information can also be found at <http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/nchecr>

Make sure you know the answers to all questions.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Worksheet: *Sexual health* questionnaire
- OHT with Australian data
- Calculator
- Fact sheet – from *KISSS* (2000)

How much do you know?

PROCEDURE

1. Ask students to complete the sexual health questionnaire on Worksheet 1.
2. Appoint a student to record the class results.
3. Depending on the time available to consider issues relating to STIs, allocate one or two questions to each student. Ensure that each student has at least one HIV question and one other STI question to research. Alternatively, students could complete all questions or be put into groups to examine a number of questions.

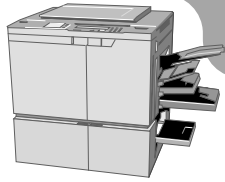
Regardless of the allocation of answers, hand out copies of the Fact Sheet provided or other information you have on STIs, HIV/AIDS and BBVs (see appendix) and ask students to look up the answers to the questions. This activity could also be done so that students have to access their own information using the library or Internet.

4. Go through the questionnaire asking for student answers to each of the questions. You will need to clarify information for students. Ensure that a student is recording how many correct answers the class gets. Ask for a volunteer to work out the class percentages for each question. Alternatively, if time permits, all students could work out the percentages.

Compare the class results with the Australian data in the *National Survey of Australian Secondary Student HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health Survey 1998*. A summary of these is included on worksheets 2 and 3.

5. Discuss the following questions.
 - How does our class compare to students in Australia?
 - If there is a difference, what could account for this?
 - What does this tell us about young people's knowledge of HIV?
 - Which STIs did young people know little about?
 - What are the implications of this for the sexual health of young people?
 - What behaviours place people at risk of contracting a STI?
6. Finish the activity by informing students that over the next few weeks they will be improving their knowledge of these diseases as well as examining why young people put themselves at risk.

(Adapted from *Catching On*)



K.I.S.S. Fact sheet

Chlamydia

Chlamydia is one of the most common STIs but is easily cured if treated early. It's tricky because it's hard to know if you've got it or not.

"I started having pains in my belly and they kept getting worse. The doctors diagnosed it as pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) from untreated chlamydia. I never even knew I had it. Now I'm not sure if I'll be able to have babies"(Lee, 18yrs)

Signs and symptoms

Females	Males
Burning feeling when you urinate, an unusual vaginal discharge, pain in the belly. Often girls notice no symptoms.	Sometimes get pus from your penis and a burning sensation when you urinate. In guys its often called non-specific urethritis (NSU).

Risky when...	What can happen	Treatment
You have vaginal or anal sex without a condom.	Untreated, chlamydia can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) causing infertility (making it harder to have babies).	Usually a single dose of antibiotics, sometimes a 10 day course of pills. You get these from your doctor or health worker.

Gonorrhoea (The Clap)

Gonorrhoea is really easy to catch. If you have unprotected sex just once with someone who has it, you've got a 50% chance of catching it.

Signs and symptoms

Females	Males
May have pelvic pain or an unusual vaginal discharge, but there are often no obvious symptoms at all.	The main symptom is pain when urinating as well as pus from your penis. Gonorrhoea of the throat can effect guys and girls and can cause a sore throat or sores around the mouth.

Risky when...	What can happen	Treatment
You have oral sex, vaginal or anal sex without a condom.	If untreated it can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (for males and females) which can lead to infertility, which means you might have trouble having babies.	Gonorrhoea can be cleared up using a one-off dose or 10 day course of pills from your doctor or health worker.

Genital Herpes

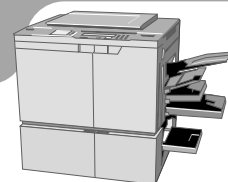
Herpes is another very common infection in Australia. There is no cure for it but there are treatments.

Signs and symptoms

Herpes causes painful, tingling, or itching blisters or ulcers. Other symptoms include aching muscles and fever.

Herpes Type 1	Herpes Type 2
Usually forms cold sores around the mouth.	Causes blisters around the genitals and anus.

Risky when...	What can happen	Treatment
You have vaginal or anal sex. If someone has a herpes sore (a cold sore) on their mouth it can be transmitted to their partner's genitals through oral sex. It is spread by direct contact with the infected area, so if a condom doesn't cover the area, it can be passed on.	While you can never get rid of the virus, the first attack is usually the worst, then the outbreaks should happen less often and be less painful as time goes on.	There are medications to cut down the pain and help the blisters to heal faster. Some medications can help control the virus so that a person gets less sores, less often. See your health worker for them.



K.I.S.S. Fact sheet

Genital warts are caused by a virus known as human papilloma virus (HPV). Two in three people in Australia carry the virus. Condoms cut down your chances of getting HPV, but because HPV can be passed through skin to skin contact, condoms are not 100% protection against this virus. If you do catch warts, they usually appear in three to 12 month's time.

Signs and symptoms

Female and Male

Warts are usually painless and start as small swellings on the penis or vagina, sometimes developing into cauliflower-like lumps, although some can be flat and hard to see. Even though heaps of people have it, the immune system usually keeps it under control, but the bad news is some strains of the virus can lead to cancer of the penis or vagina.

Female

Warts can also grow inside the vagina so it's possible to have them and not know it. It's important for a girl to get a Pap test every two years once she has started having sex to check for any signs of cell change that might lead to cancer.

Risky when...

You have anal or vaginal sex. Sometimes it can be passed on from the fingers to the genitals.

What can happen

If warts are untreated they can multiply so it's best to have them treated.

Treatment

The doctor can remove the warts, but the virus will still be there.

GIRLS... a word about Pap tests

A Pap test takes about five minutes. It looks for changes in the cervix that might turn into cancer. The cervix sits between the vagina and uterus. If you have had sex you should have a Pap test every two years. Many changes are not cancer but they still need treatment, and cancer that is found early can be cured.



Genital Warts

Syphilis is fairly uncommon but it still exists. If it's not treated it can stay in the body for many years and cause serious problems.

Signs and symptoms

The first sign of syphilis is a sore that appears on the penis or vagina, anus or mouth about ten days to three weeks after sex with an infected person. It goes away in a week or two, but the bacteria are still in the body. The second stage is when a rash appears on the hands and feet, the face and other parts of the body.

Risky when...

You have vaginal, anal or oral sex without a condom.

What can happen

The rash might go away, but the infection is still in the body and a person may have no signs or symptoms for years before the third stage appears. At this stage there can be serious damage to the nervous system, the brain and blood system.

Treatment

Syphilis can be treated with special antibiotics prescribed by the doctor and cured if treated in the early stages.

Syphilis (The Pox)

Signs and symptoms

Sometimes there are signs similar to the flu up to three weeks after becoming infected. Not all people get these symptoms. Sometimes people start getting illnesses two to seven years after they first get infected. If people go for a blood test to see if they have the virus, sometimes it takes up to three months for it to show.

Risky when...

- you have anal or vaginal sex without a condom
- you share needles and syringes, and other injecting equipment
- you are HIV positive and pregnant, there is a risk to the baby.

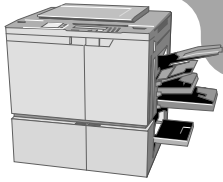
What can happen

Some years after an HIV infection, a person's immune system can become so weak that it can no longer fight even common illnesses. When people get really sick from HIV the illness is called AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

Treatment

There's no cure for HIV/AIDS, but the symptoms can be helped and the virus can be slowed down by using medication. There are also social support services which help with emotional and social aspects of living with HIV.

HIV



K.I.S.S. Fact sheet

Hepatitis targets the liver, which is responsible for filtering the blood and breaking down food and poisons in the body. It can be passed on through contact with blood, semen, vaginal fluid and spit.

Signs and symptoms

- darker urine, and pale faeces (poo)
- yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice)
- fever and extreme tiredness
- stomach pains and vomiting.

Hepatitis B

Risky when...

- you share any injecting equipment including tourniquet, tables or other surfaces, and when there is blood on hands and fingers (even where there is only a tiny amount of blood)
- you have vaginal or anal sex without a condom
- you get a tattoo or body piercing with equipment that hasn't been sterilised in an autoclave
- you get a tattoo painted with ink from an ink pot used to tattoo someone else
- contact sports when there are cuts and grazes
- mother to child before and during childbirth.

What can happen

95% of people get completely well. About 5% of people can't get rid of the virus and become carriers. Some people end up getting liver disease, which can lead to liver failure or cancer of the liver.

Treatment

Once infected there's no complete cure, but hepatitis B has a vaccine. You can be nearly 100% certain you won't catch hepatitis B if you get shots against it, although it does not protect you from other kinds of hepatitis. Ask your doctor or community health centre about the shots.

Hepatitis C is not commonly transmitted through sex, but it gets a mention in this booklet because it is affecting so many Australians and is passed on through contact with infected blood (similar to HIV and hepatitis B). The main risk is injecting drug use. If anyone has ever injected, they have a one in three chance of being infected. The chances get even higher the longer a person has been injecting.

Signs and symptoms

- Most people who are infected will have no symptoms at all at first, however some people will get:
- yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice)
 - flu-like symptoms soon after becoming infected
 - tiredness, pain in the abdomen, nausea (feeling sick)
 - dark urine, pale faeces (poo).
- Sometimes symptoms can take years to develop.

Hepatitis C

Risky when...

- there is contact with infected blood, and it gets into the blood stream
- sharing needles, syringes, swabs, spoons, filters, tourniquets, water or mix that has had a used fit in it, and not washing your hands immediately before and after injecting
- being tattooed, getting a body piercing, or having acupuncture (with acupuncture, make sure new, one-use disposable needles are used for each client).

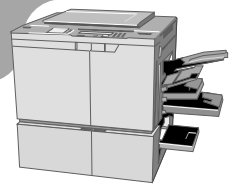
Some people got it from blood transfusions before 1990 (the blood supplies are now screened for hepatitis C).

What can happen

- About 20% of people get well.
- About 80% of people become carriers. They may remain healthy or have long lasting liver inflammation. This can make you extremely sick and tired, and have a huge impact on your life.
- Some people will develop scarring of the liver (cirrhosis) which can take 15 years to develop. Some people will suffer serious liver illness, which can lead to liver failure or cancer of the liver.

Treatment

A medical drug called Interferon helps some people fight off the virus, however it doesn't work for everyone. There is no vaccine for hepatitis C and you can be infected over and over again, each time putting your liver under greater strain.



Sexual health questionnaire

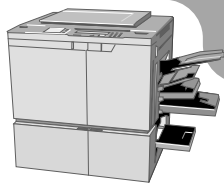
Please answer 'yes' or 'no' to question 1 by putting a tick in the Yes or No column

1. Which of the following diseases are sexually transmitted?

	Y	N
gonorrhoea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
glandular fever	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
genital herpes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
flu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
venereal disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
measles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
syphilis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
chicken pox	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIV/AIDS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
chlamydia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
mumps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
tuberculosis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
genital warts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
impetigo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
pelvic inflammatory disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

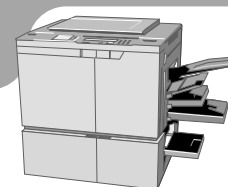
Please answer the remaining questions by putting a tick in the True or False column

	T	F
2. A person can get HIV (the AIDS virus) by sharing a needle and syringe with someone when injecting drugs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. A woman can get HIV (the AIDS virus) through having sex with a man.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. If someone with HIV coughs or sneezes near you, you could get the HIV virus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. A man can get HIV through having sex with a man.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. A person can get HIV from mosquitoes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. If a woman with HIV is pregnant, her baby can become infected with HIV.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. A person can get HIV by hugging someone who has it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Sexual health questionnaire

	T	F
9. The pill (birth control) can protect a woman from HIV infection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. A man can get HIV through having sex with a woman.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. If condoms are used during sex this helps to protect people from getting HIV.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Someone who looks very healthy could pass on the HIV infection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. A man can have a sexually transmitted disease without any obvious symptoms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. A woman can have a sexually transmitted disease without any obvious symptoms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Apart from HIV, all sexually transmitted diseases can be cured.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted disease that affects only women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Chlamydia can lead to sterility among women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Once a person has caught genital herpes, then they will always have the virus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. People who always use condoms are safe from all STIs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Gonorrhoea can be transmitted during oral sex.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Genital warts can only be spread by intercourse.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. HIV only infects gay men and injecting drug users.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. The virus that causes cold sores can also cause genital herpes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Hepatitis A is sexually transmitted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Hepatitis B is sexually transmitted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Hepatitis C is sexually transmitted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Hepatitis C has no long-term effects on your health.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. It is possible to be vaccinated against hepatitis A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. It is possible to be vaccinated against hepatitis B.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. It is possible to be vaccinated against hepatitis C.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. People who have injected drugs are not at risk of hepatitis C.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Tattooing and body piercing can transmit hepatitis C.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Australian data of sexual health survey of Year 10 students

% of students who answered STD transmission questions correctly

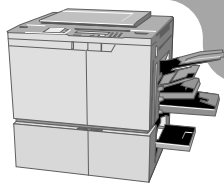
Please answer 'yes' or 'no' to question 1 by putting a tick in the Yes or No column

1. Which of the following diseases are sexually transmitted?

	M	F
gonorrhoea		47.2
glandular fever		75.5
genital herpes		87.0
flu		87.2
venereal disease		34.3
measles		82.9
syphilis		39.4
chicken pox		84.3
HIV/AIDS		99.2
chlamydia		37.2
mumps		75.6
tuberculosis		37.9
genital warts		84.8
impetigo		53.2
pelvic inflammatory disease	41.5	46.7

Please answer the remaining questions by putting a tick in the True or False column

	M	F
2. A person can get HIV (the AIDS virus) by sharing a needle and syringe with someone when injecting drugs.		97.0
3. A woman can get HIV (the AIDS virus) through having sex with a man.	97.0	96.2
4. If someone with HIV coughs or sneezes near you, you could get the HIV virus.	90.2	91.0
5. A man can get HIV through having sex with a man.	89.0	84.5
6. A person can get HIV from mosquitoes.	45.5	48.9
7. If a woman with HIV is pregnant, her baby can become infected with HIV.	73.2	78.9
8. A person can get HIV by hugging someone who has it.	97.1	98.8



Australian data of sexual health survey of Year 10 students

	M	F
9. The pill (birth control) can protect a woman from HIV infection.	82.6	84.7
10. A man can get HIV through having sex with a woman.	91.8	91.4
11. If condoms are used during sex this helps to protect people from getting HIV.	95.9	91.4
12. Someone who looks very healthy could pass on the HIV infection?	79.9	82.4
13. A man can have a sexually transmitted disease without any obvious symptoms.	71.1	79.5
14. A woman can have a sexually transmitted disease without any obvious symptoms.	71.2	79.7
15. Apart from HIV, all sexually transmitted diseases can be cured.	51.1	52.9
16. Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted disease that affects only women.	8.3	7.9
17. Chlamydia can lead to sterility among women.	18.5	21.8
18. Once a person has caught genital herpes, then they will always have the virus.	20.0	28.5
19. People who always use condoms are safe from all STIs.	68.4	72.6
20. Gonorrhoea can be transmitted during oral sex.	30.0	31.0
21. Genital warts can only be spread by intercourse.	23.6	34.0
22. HIV only infects gay men and injecting drug users.	70.0	77.2
23. The virus that causes cold sores can also cause genital herpes.	22.9	29.3
24. Hepatitis A is sexually transmitted.	17.2	13.8
25. Hepatitis B is sexually transmitted	46.5	51.2
26. Hepatitis C is sexually transmitted.	19.5	14.9
27. Hepatitis C has no long-term effects on your health.	31.6	31.4
28. It is possible to be vaccinated against hepatitis A.	34.9	37.8
29. It is possible to be vaccinated against hepatitis B.	34.9	42.3
30. It is possible to be vaccinated against hepatitis C.	8.6	5.4
31. People who have injected drugs are not at risk of hepatitis C.	51.1	54.7
32. Tattooing and body piercing can transmit hepatitis C.	33.0	33.7