

Activity: 9-10.4.4

Key Messages

- STIs can be easily transmitted in a population if safer sex is not practiced.
- It is important to get tested for STIs after any unprotected sex.
- Always using a condom is the most effective way of helping to prevent the transmission of STIs and reduces the risk of pregnancy.

Activity Details

Victorian Curriculum

Health & PE Critique behaviours and contextual factors that influence the health and wellbeing of their communities VCHPEP151

Time 20 minutes

Levels 9 & 10

Equipment

- whiteboard and markers
- *Spider web of STIs* Teacher reference sheet

A spider web of STIs

Purpose

To provide a clear picture of how easily STIs can spread without the use of a condom.

To consider the importance of always wearing a condom for sexual intercourse.

Teaching notes

This is a simple and very effective activity. Keep the numbers of partners realistic; you don't need to use high numbers for the students to clearly see the effects. Use names that could be male or female so that same-sex attracted young people are not excluded. You should also include examples of bisexual and same-sex relationships. Ensure that you include information about how STIs are contracted and the fact that they are often asymptomatic and are only detected by an STI check.

Procedure

1. Read the scenario to the class.
2. Start the spider web by drawing Jo and Chris. Then extend the web to include the person Jo had sex last year with, Al.
3. Al has had a number of sexual partners. Continue the lines of the web, showing how many partners Al has had and how many partners each of them, in turn, has had. You can continue this as far as you like, picking a different number of sexual partners for each person.
4. Once completed, use a different coloured whiteboard marker to indicate on the diagram a person who has an STI (it is best if you choose someone higher on the diagram so that the STI filters down to a greater number of people). Trace along the web to show how the STI may have been transmitted to others. It is best to use the example of an STI which is common amongst young people (e.g. chlamydia).
5. Ask the students what they think the purpose of the activity is. How could each of these characters protect themselves from contracting an STI? Review condom use briefly. Ask students if they believe it is a person's responsibility to discuss previous sexual partners. Would this be difficult? Discuss the health implications of an untreated STI.
6. STIs can be contracted through oral sex, vaginal sex, anal sex and, in some cases, heavy petting. Therefore, it is also recommended to use a condom or a dental dam for oral sex.
7. Ensure students know that if someone has unprotected sex, they are at risk of contracting an STI. Many STIs have no symptoms, so it is important to go to the doctor or health clinic for a check-up after any unprotected sex. Usually, a simple urine sample is all that is required.
8. Finish by discussing where students could go for an STI checkup in their local area.

Teacher reference sheet: A spider web of STIs

Spider web scenario

Jo and Chris have been going out for a few months. Chris has never had sex before. Jo had sex with a guy she went out with last year. They both want to have sex and Jo has been on the pill for over a year. When Jo and Chris are talking about contraception, Jo is adamant that the pill is sufficient. Chris, however, has recently had some sex ed classes at school and really wants to use a condom. Jo gets annoyed about this, saying she's not a skank, she has never slept around and she's only had one other sexual partner.

Your spider web may look something like this:

