

CHAPTER VI: Knowing about STIs

Expected outcomes

Participants will learn about STIs – the definition, symptoms, types, myths and prevention.

Peer Educator will become aware of the knowledge level of the participants.

Winning A Point

Objectives To understand the prevalent knowledge/beliefs/misconceptions in the group about STIs.

To give information on the types of STIs.

Materials Flip charts, markers, box with questions, answer sheet.

Time 45 minutes.

Process Ask the participants to divide into 2 groups. Explain that they will play a game to gain understanding about STIs.

Ask the groups to decide on a leader who will choose the question for the team. Also, ask them to choose a name for their group.

Ask the two groups to sit facing each other. Place the box of questions in the center of the two groups.

Keep the question-and-answer sheet with you. Inform the groups that the decision of the facilitator regarding the scores will be final.

Put a flip chart up to keep scores on—divide it into 2 columns using the names of the groups.

Rules of the game:

- Each group will alternatively be asked a question.
- If a group fails to answer correctly, the question will be passed to the other group.
- Each team will have 2 minutes to produce the correct answer.
- Each correct answer will be worth 10 points. If the question is passed to the other group and correctly answered, it will receive 10 bonus points (10+10).
- The scores will be added after the final question has been answered.
- The winners will receive a reward.
- The facilitator will provide the correct answer if both groups fail to give the correct answer.

Use the following questions to facilitate a group discussion after the game:

- *Did you know as much about sexually transmitted diseases as you thought you did? Why/Why not?*
- *How would you start a conversation with your friends/peer group on STIs? What would you say?*
- *Did the exercise clarify your misconceptions or beliefs about STIs? Do you still have some beliefs that require clarification?*
- *What are the best ways of avoiding STIs? Why?*
- *Can you be sure who the source of the infection is? Why/Why not?*

Notes for the Facilitator

This exercise is fun. It allows the participants to share information with each other and receive correct information. This exercise can be done in a mixed group or separately, in gender-based groups. If you are doing this exercise with people who are not literate, please ask the questions yourself. The table given below can also be given as reading material after the exercise is over.

Questions and answers that can be used for the exercise

Questions (to be copied on slips of paper put in a box for the groups)	Answers (to be kept by the facilitator with the questions for scoring and giving information)
What is a STI/STD? Give a correct description.	STIs are sexually transmitted infections. Previously they were known as sexually transmitted diseases. These are passed on through sexual intercourse and intimate body contact, especially if exchange of body fluid takes place.
What is another name for sexually transmitted infections?	Venereal diseases and or STDs.
Name 4 sexually transmitted infections.	Gonorrhea, Syphilis, Herpes, HIV/AIDS, Genital Warts, Chancroid.
Are all STIs curable?	No, most are curable, but the exceptions are the viral STIs such as herpes, HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B.
Do you know immediately that you have a STI?	Not always. You may have a STI but may have no symptoms for a long time (e.g., Chlamydia for both sexes, gonorrhea for women).
Give 3 possible symptoms of an STI.	Burning sensation while urinating. A clear or creamy discharge from the penis. Blisters, ulcers or swelling on or around the genitals. Warts around the penis, vagina or anus.
Why are some STIs dangerous?	If not detected and treated, the infection can spread and can, for example, cause sterility in women. Syphilis can lead to death. The presence of an STI also facilitates HIV transmission.
Is HIV/AID an STI?	Yes, when the virus is transmitted by sexual intercourse.

Name the 3 most effective ways to protect yourself from STI infection.	Abstinence (no sex), being faithful (mutual monogamy), correct condom use (ABC of prevention).
What is the first thing you should do when you think you have a STI?	See a doctor to get proper diagnosis and treatment.
Your doctor prescribed medication for 10 days but the symptoms disappear after 5 days of medicine intake. Can you stop taking the medication?	No, STI germs are hard to kill. Therefore, the medication must be taken for the duration of medicine intake.
Why are people who have a STI more vulnerable to HIV infection?	Many STIs cause sores (openings on the skin, in or around the genitals). These sores make it easier for HIV to enter the body.
Can a pregnant woman who has an STI pass the infection to the baby?	Yes, children born to infected mothers can become infected with a STI during delivery. The HIV virus can also be passed on to the baby through breast-feeding.
You can have sex while you are being treated for an STI.	No, you can infect your partner even while you are being treated. Therefore, you should not have sex until you are completely cured.
STIs can be cured by having sex with a virgin.	No, this is a total fallacy. In fact, it is likely that you will infect the virgin with STI.
You can contract STIs only if you go to sex workers for sex.	No, STIs can be contracted from anyone who has the infection, including your regular partner.
You will not contract STIs if you are careful and wash your genitals with soap and water after having sex.	No, STI viruses/germs cannot be removed through washing or bathing.
Only women can spread STIs.	No, STIs can be spread by any person who is infected.
Birth control pills are a good method for STI prevention for women.	No, birth control pills do not prevent STI. Only the use of condoms can reduce the risk of STIs.
You can buy medicines from the drug store to treat the STI infection without going to the doctor.	No, STIs must be diagnosed and treated by a qualified doctor.