



3 Reproductive Tract Infections (RTIs) including Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

What are RTIs/STIs and how are they spread?

Many women suffer sexual infection, including abnormal discharges through the vagina, ulcers and sores in the genital region and pelvic infections. Men also generally have sexual infections.

Reproductive Tract Infections (RTIs) are infections of the reproductive organs that are caused by various germs. Though RTIs can occur both in men and women, they are more common in women, because their body structure and functions make it easier for germs to enter.

RTIs that spread through sexual contact are called Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). Reproductive organs can also get infected because of trauma during delivery, unhygienic practices during delivery and abortions, as well as overgrowth of germs normally found in the vagina. Poor general health, poor genital hygiene and early start of sexual activity are all factors that can make women prone to these infections.

Many women suffer from reproductive health problems. Women are more vulnerable to these infections due to biological factors. Unequal power relations in matters of sex i.e. sexual violence, non-use of condoms by men also expose women to risk.