# **Listerine mouthwash can CURE this common STI, new study reveals**

IF YOU thought all mouthwash did was keep your breath fresh, think again.

By [Sarah Buchanan](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/journalists/sarah-buchanan) / Published 22nd December 2016

Gargling Listerine mouthwash might kill the bacteria responsible for a certain STI.

Gonorrhoea, the second [most common bacterial STI in the UK after chlamydia](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/love-sex/527823/Chlamydia-symptoms-STI-STD-most-common-UK), has been sweeping across the country at increasing rates over the past few years.

Some strains of the disease have even become resistant to antibiotics – leading to outbreaks of [drug-resistant and untreatable cases of “super-gonorrhoea”](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/547561/Gonorrhoea-mutant-strain-drug-resistant-Hawaii-US-antibiotics-azithromycin-ceftriaxone).

But new research suggests that the spread could be curbed simply by swigging some minty fresh liquid.

The Australian study involved 196 gay and bisexual men who had previously tested positive for “the clap” in their mouths or throats.

They were split into two groups and randomly told to rinse and gargle with their Listerine or a salt water (saline) solution.

After gargling for just one minute, the Listerine-drinking men had a proportion of viable gonorrhoea in the throat of 52%, while the saline-drinkers had 84%.

The men who swigged mouthwash were also 80% less likely to test positive for gonorrhoea in their throat five minutes after glugging Listerine.

The study, published in the journal Sexually Transmitted Infections, said: "Our data provides preliminary evidence to support the further investigation of mouthwash as a non-condom-based control measure for gonorrhoea.

"Listerine mouthwash is a cheap, easy to use and effective agent that inhibits gonorrhoea growth and requires further careful consideration and study.

“If daily use of mouthwash was shown to reduce the duration of untreated infection and/or reduce the probability of acquisition of N gonorrhoeae, then this readily available, condom-less, and low cost intervention may have very significant public health implications in the control of gonorrhoea.”

Meanwhile another recent sex disease study found [people who trim their public hair have a higher chance of having an STD](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/567743/Sex-transmitted-disease-STD-habit-more-likely-have-do-I-health-study-sexually-trim-hair).

Groomers who opted for the full "Brazilian-look" by trimming all their pubic hair 11 times a year were four times more likely to have an infection than those who never neaten up.

The study, published in the journal Sexually Transmitted Infections, said: "Pubic hair removal has become a common practice among men and women worldwide.

"The media has driven adoption of new grooming patterns and modern society's definition of attractiveness, cleanliness and feelings of femininity or masculinity.

"As a result, our perception of genital normalcy has changed."

If you’re not sure if you have an STI, here’s [six hidden signs you’ve been infected](http://www.dailystar.co.uk/love-sex/554980/STI-STD-symptoms-sex-how-do-I-know-if-I-have).