

Sistema Socio Sanitario



Regione  
Lombardia

ATS Milano  
Città Metropolitana

# SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES, HIV/AIDS AND ECTOPARASSITOSI



**DIPARTIMENTO DI IGIENE E PREVENZIONE  
SANITARIA**

**MALATTIE A TRASMISSIONE SESSUALE / HIV**

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# SUMMARY

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) are caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites that are transmitted from one person to another during unprotected sexual encounters (heterosexual or homosexual alike).

When treating STDs, particular attention must be paid to the partners of those who have been infected.

4  **CANDIDIASIS and other genital infections**

5  **CHLAMYDIA infection**

6  **CONDYLOMATOSIS**

7  **GENITAL HERPES**

8  **GONORRHEA**

9  **Viral HEPATITIS**

10  **HIV/AIDS**

11  **SYPHILIS**

12  **PEDICULOSIS**

14  **TINA**

16  **SCABIES**

17  **HEALTH-CARE CENTER MTS**

18  **TELEPHONE LINE HIV/MTS**

19  **ASSISTANCE HIV/AIDS**



# CANDIDA

## and other genital infections

### What is it?

*Candida*, *Trichomonas*, *Mycoplasma* can cause genital and urinary tract infections, more easily in women than men.

Candida is caused by a fungus that lives inside our bodies without causing problems. It manifests itself through poor hygiene, immune-suppressed states (chronic diseases, antibiotic treatments, diabetes).

Therefore, this illness isn't necessarily tied to sexual activity, but it can be transmitted through such activity.

### How does it manifest itself?

Through genital secretions which vary in appearance according to which infection is present.

Itching or reddening of the genital areas, pain and discomfort during sexual intercourse and urination are the symptoms which characterize these infections.

### How is it transmitted?

Through unprotected sexual encounters.

### Diagnosis

Analysis of genital secretions under the microscope.

### Cure

Antibiotics/Antimicrotics are used, via mouth or topical application (such as creams and specific detergents).



# CHLAMYDIA

### What is it?

It is an infection caused by bacteria that live inside the body's cells.

### How does it manifest itself?

Often it presents itself without symptoms, and after 1 to 3 weeks, it can result in genital infections. Symptoms include a burning sensation when urinating, penile secretions, abdominal pain, possible infertility in the woman if it becomes chronic. If the woman is pregnant, she may have a spontaneous abortion.

### How is it transmitted?

Through unprotected sexual encounters.

### Diagnosis

Specific urine or genital secretion samples are taken and analyzed.

### Cure

It is treated with antibiotics.



# CONDYLOMATOSIS

## What is it?

It is an infection caused by a virus, the Papilloma-virus (HPV).

## How does it manifest itself?

In most cases, the infection runs its course without any noticeable symptoms. In some cases, warts can present themselves on the genitals. If remained untreated and if the infection deteriorates, it can lead to genital tumours (in the woman, uterine cancer).

## How is it transmitted?

Through unprotected sexual encounters. Furthermore, the use of a condom isn't always a guarantee against infection, as it can also be transmitted across the exposed skin, not covered by the condom itself.

## Diagnosis

Clinical if lesions are observable, and in women, it is diagnosed after having done a PAP test. All women between 25 and 64 years of age should undergo a PAP test every three years in order to prevent cervical cancer.

## Cure

Specific creams may be applied locally, or the lesions are clinically burned off. The infection may re-present itself.

## Prevention

On top of the use of the condom, other preventive measures include an efficient vaccine for women who have not yet come into contact with the virus.



# GENITAL HERPES

## What is it?

It is a viral infection.

## How does it manifest itself?

The symptoms can be quite mild (reddening of the skin and a burning sensation) or more intense (presence of numerous painful blisters and ulcers in the genital area).

As the virus never truly leaves the body, the infection tends to reappear in time, especially when the person in question is under a lot of physical or psychological stress.

## How is it transmitted?

Through unprotected sexual encounters and contact with infected mucosae.

## Diagnosis

It becomes clinical when the lesions on the skin are observable.

## Cure

A decisive cure is not yet available. However, the current antiviral medication being used decreases the duration of the presence of lesions, alleviates the symptoms and also diminishes the possibility of relapses.



## GONORRHEA

### What is it?

It is a bacterial infection, caused by the gonococco bacterium present in festering genital secretions of those who are infected.

### How does it manifest itself?

After 2-20 days after the contagion has taken place, symptoms include a burning sensation when urinating or anal discomfort, secretion of festering genital liquid (more evident in men), and sore throat in case of oral infection.

If remained untreated, gonorrhoea can lead to infertility in the woman.

### How is it transmitted?

Through unprotected sexual encounters, and via contact with genitals, the mouth and the anus. Avoiding contact with semen does not inhibit transmission.

### Diagnosis

A sample of the genitals' or mouths' secretions is taken and analyzed.

### Cure

It is treated with antibiotics.  
The infection may re-present itself.



## VIRAL HEPATITIS

### (Hepatitis A, B, C)

### What are they?

They are viral illnesses which target the liver.

### How do they manifest themselves?

- Acute hepatitis with jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes) and liver pain;
- chronic hepatitis: Hepatitis B, and especially Hepatitis C, can progress as time passes and can cause cirrhoses and liver tumours;
- the state of "healthy transmitter" can arise, in that the infected person shows no symptoms of the illness, but is still able to infect other.

### How is it transmitted?

- Unprotected sexual encounters (for Hepatitis A: oral-genital).
- Contact with the blood of those infected.
- From infected mother to child (during the pregnancy or birth).

### Diagnosis

Blood test which searches for the specific antibodies.

### Cure

Hepatitis A usually disappears without complications, and for Hepatitis B and C, which can become chronic, adequately efficient pharmaceutical treatments are available.

Vaccines for hepatitis A and B are available.



## HIV/AIDS

### What is it?

AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is an illness caused by the HIV virus, which results in the decrease of the body's ability to protect itself from external pathogens.

### How does it manifest itself?

The illness can remain symptom-free for years (in this period however contagion is still possible), or it can manifest itself with symptoms of varying intensity.

### How is it transmitted?

- Unprotected sexual encounters (vaginal, anal, oral-genital) with people who are infected with the virus.
- Blood: sharing of infected hypodermic needles, tattooing and piercing implements which have been contaminated with infected blood, as well as day to day objects such as razors, scissors, toothbrush etc., contaminated.
- From HIV infected mother to her child (during the pregnancy itself, the birth and through breastfeeding).

### How it isn't transmitted:

- via hand-shakes, kisses, hugs, bites, scratches;
- saliva, coughs, tears, sweat, urine, feces;
- plates, glasses and cutlery;
- toilets, showers, swimming pools, saunas, gym environments.

### Diagnosis

The test for the detection of HIV antibodies can be made after three months since the last risk behavior.

### Cure

The current treatment which focuses on the use of antiviral medicine is quite efficient in keeping the illness under control, and must be continued for the remainder of the patient's life.



## SYPHILIS

### What is it?

It is caused by the *Treponema Pallidum* bacterium.

### How does it manifest itself?

The incubation period varies from 10 to 90 days (with an average of 21 days) after which the following clinical observation can be made: presence of a small, un-painful ulcer in the area in which the contagion occurred (genitals or mouth).

### How is it transmitted?

Across direct contact with open infected wounds (vaginal, oral and anal sex).

It can also be transmitted from the mother to the fetus during pregnancy, resulting possible the death of the fetus, or the birth of a baby infected with congenital syphilis.

### Diagnosis

Via a blood test to search for antibodies. This should be done around 40 days after the suspected infection. Sexual partners should also be tested.

### Cure

It is cured with antibiotics.



# PEDICULOSIS

(head and pubes)



## What is it?

It is a parasitic infection caused by lice, which lay their eggs that hatch within 7-10 days. The larvae complete their development in 7-13 days. The eggs remain attached to the root of the hair with a gluey, highly resistant substance, making them difficult to remove with an ordinary comb.

## How does it manifest itself?

The most common symptom is localized itching, either of the scalp or the genital area.

## How is it transmitted?

The parasitosis is usually spread in crowded environments such as schools, camps, via direct contact with an infected person (even via sexual activity) or indirectly, via the sharing of combs, brushes and hats. The infestation occurs even if one's personal hygiene is optimal.

## Diagnosis

The diagnosis is made when the lice or its eggs are observed in the hair (head or pubic hair) with the help of a magnifying lens. In some cases, the eggs can also be present on the eyelashes, eyebrows and beard.

## Cure

It is treated with the use of specific creams, foams and gels.

In most cases, the eggs must also be mechanically removed with a specific comb. To kill the eggs, a mixture of water and vinegar can be used. After a week, if some eggs survived the treatment and new lice were born, the process must be repeated.

Currently there is no preventive medication available. The antiparasitic drug does not prevent the infestation, and so cannot be used as a preventive measure.

## Further measures

Check everyone in the family for lice, and all those who have come into close contact with the infected person.

Accurately wash bed-sheets, towels, underwear, and all items that have come into contact with the neck and head of the of the person affected by the lice; Vacuum couches, sofas, mattresses, and areas where children play. Combs and brushes should be immersed in boiling water for 10 minutes.

Disinfecting public areas is not advantageous as the lice aren't able to survive in open environments for long periods of time.

To avoid the spread of the infection, it is recommended that the families of those who have experienced pediculosis to undergo regular checkups.



# TINEA

(head and body)

## What is it?

Tinea is a contagious skin, hair and nail disease caused by various species of fungi known as *dermatophytes*.

## How is manifested?

The incubation period varies, but it usually lasts between 5 to 14 days after the contagion took place.

The disease leads to the presence of round, red blotches that tend to then spread to the peripheral areas and lighten in colour in their centre. When tinea affects the head, hair splits easily.

After having been treated adequately and efficiently, the disease is no longer contagious.

## How is it transmitted?

The infection is spread via direct contact with infected animals (dogs, cats) or other infected people. It can also be contracted via indirect contact with infected towels, combs, undergarments, hats, shoes etc.

## Diagnosis

A specialist will diagnose the disease via microscopic analyses.

## Cure

It is treated with oral or topical medication.

## How can it be prevented?

By exercising ordinary personal hygiene, such as:

- not sharing towels, underwear, combs, hats etc;
- avoiding walking barefoot in public areas such as gyms, swimming pools, shower disinfecting feet properly before entering swimming pools;
- avoid petting animals you don't know, and especially if a skin disease is evident;
- by bringing pets to the vet at regular intervals to ascertain their health.

## How to prevent its spread

It is important to follow these procedures:

- wash undergarments separately at high temperatures (90°);
- bring your pets for a veterinary check up if they have come into contact with infected persons.



## What is it?

It is a skin disease caused by tiny insects, not visible to the human eye, called *mites*. The mites attach themselves to the clothes of those who are infected and can therefore spread quite easily.

## How does it manifest itself?

An itching sensation, especially during the night.

## How is it transmitted?

The parasite gets transmitted from one person to another via:

- direct contact with affected people;
- indirect contact as a result of sharing towels, under garments etc.

## Diagnosis

With the observation of the mite on the skin.

## Cure

It is treated with the use of topical creams to be applied on the skin.

Seat **MTS Milano**

Viale Jenner, 44

Tel. **02/8578.9871**

Opening Hours:  
from **MONDAY** to **FRIDAY**  
**8:15 – 15:30**

Seat **MTS Sesto San Giovanni**

Viale Matteotti, 13

Tel. **02/8578.2650**

Opening Hours:  
**MONDAY** and **THURSDAY**  
**8:15 – 15:30**

Email: [mtsmi@ats-milano.it](mailto:mtsmi@ats-milano.it)

## Free services:

- meetings with sanitary information as the topic of discussion;
- HIV test and tests for the other STDs (syphilis, hepatitis, urinary tract infections, chlamydia);
- dermatological and gynaecological examinations;
- pharmaceutical treatments for STD.

Identification, medical certificates and doctor's prescriptions are not necessary. Check - ups are available even without an appointment, but reservations are recommended because some services are restricted to specific hours. Under-aged individuals, non-residents and foreigners are also welcome.



## TELEPHONE LINE HIV/MTS

Tel. 02/8578.8912

Operating hours:  
from **Monday to Thursday**  
**9:30 – 15:30**

### Services available:

- orientation on how the HIV test is run, what the diagnostic exams entail and on visits to health-care structures specialized in STDs;
- sanitary information with reference to how STDs are spread;
- consultancies with regard to the psychological, social and cultural aspects of human sexuality;
- primary psychological support to help people during difficult situations (such as the confirmation of having HIV or another STD, homosexuality, bisexuality and sexual phobia).

### At whom this is aimed:

- people who are highly exposed to STDs due to their risky behaviour (such as homosexuality, bisexuality, their being consumers in the prostitution industry, sex tourism);
- adolescents and young adults going through a difficult period with regard to their sphere of physical and relational intimacy;
- people who have contracted an STD, along with their partners;
- individuals who are worried about their health and the possible consequences of their sexual activity.

## ASSISTANCE HIV/AIDS



Viale Jenner, 44  
Tel. 02.8578.9031/9032  
Fax 02.8578.9884

Email: [mtsmi@ats-milano.it](mailto:mtsmi@ats-milano.it)

Reception in charge of organization:  
from **MONDAY to FRIDAY**  
**8:30 – 15:30**

Requests can be made by part  
of the single citizen  
or via health-care structures.

### Services:

- reception and analysis of the person's needs;
- support and orientation offered to the patients and their families with regards to sanitary and social health care structures in their area;
- at home assistance with nursing and rehabilitative care;
- education with regards to sanitary hygiene;
- help with finding and joining health care structures specialized in the treatment of AIDS day care centre, hospice and accommodation.

Sistema Socio Sanitario



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**MTS**

Reference Center for HIV and STDs