



Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) Awareness

College Health Center Communications Toolkit

STI Unit | Division of Public Health | Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

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**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
of HEALTH SERVICES**



Table of Contents

Message map	2
Sample social media	3
Sample news article	6
Additional resources	8


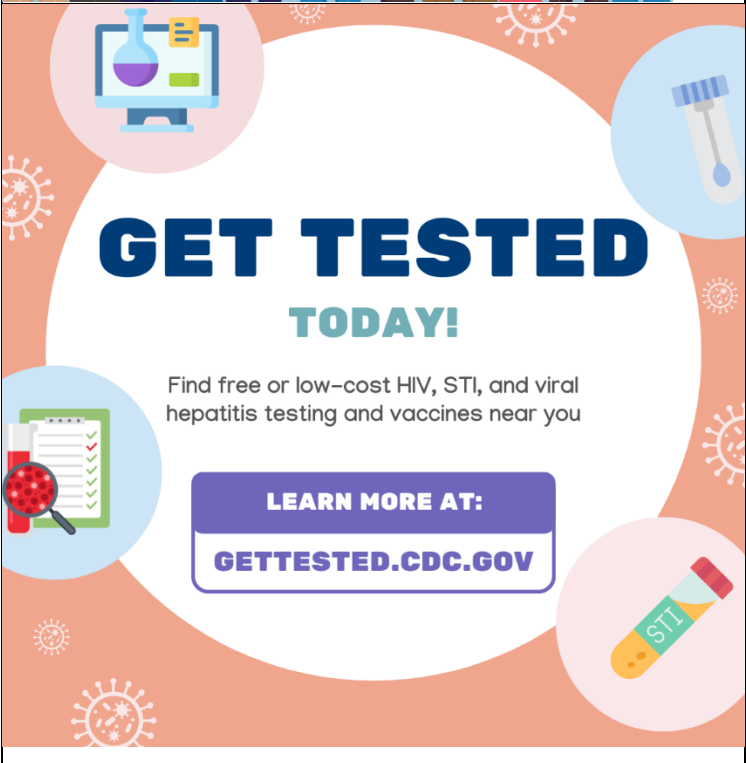


Message Map

Key Message	Supporting Information
Sexual health is part of your overall wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">College students are often taking control of their health for the first time when they go to school. It's important to learn how to prioritize health and wellbeing, including sexual health.
STIs are very common among college students, but many people with STIs may not experience symptoms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">According to recent statewide data, STI rates for gonorrhea and chlamydia are highest among college-aged populations.
Health officials recommend most college students get tested for STIs at least once a year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All sexually active women younger than 25 years should be tested for gonorrhea and chlamydia every year.Men who have sex with men should also be tested at least once a year.
STI testing is confidential, painless, and often free or low-cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students can find testing centers near them at gettested.cdc.gov/
If you're having sex, using a condom correctly is the best way to prevent STIs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Other forms of birth control, like IUDs or birth control pills, can prevent pregnancy but not STIs.Find the how-to-use a condom card in the Additional Resources section to ensure condoms are used effectively.
Protect your sexual health and show respect for partners by having open and honest conversations about your STI status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Communication is key to healthy relationships. Sexually active individuals should consider checking in with partners about their STI status to create a safe, comfortable environment.



Sample Social Media

Sample Post	Suggested Caption
 <p>STAY SAFE, WEAR CONDOMS!</p> <p>Find free or low-cost condoms online</p> <p>Visit www.cdc.gov/condom-use/index.html to learn more.</p>	<p>Wearing condoms during sexual contact can prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) protecting you and your partner(s). You can find free or low-cost condoms near you using the CDC's website. Visit www.cdc.gov/condom-use/index.html to learn more.</p> <p>Link: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/images/find-a-condom-social.png</p>
 <p>GET TESTED TODAY!</p> <p>Find free or low-cost HIV, STI, and viral hepatitis testing and vaccines near you</p> <p>LEARN MORE AT:</p> <p>GETTESTED.CDC.GOV</p>	<p>Take care of your sexual health by getting tested for HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and viral hepatitis. Locate free or low-cost testing and vaccinations near you using the CDC Get Tested Website. Visit gettested.cdc.gov to learn more.</p> <p>Link: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/images/get-tested-social.png</p>

Texting about testing...



How to communicate about STIs with sex partners

Tips:

- **Be proactive.** Bring up testing before things get physical.
- **Share your perspective.** Explain why testing is important and helps you feel more comfortable.
- **Remember you're protecting your health.** It might feel awkward, but sharing your STI status shows you care about your wellbeing and theirs.

Initiating the conversation



Hey! Just wanted to be upfront, but I'd be more comfortable if we talk about our sexual health before anything physical happens.

Is that okay with you?

Yeah, totally fair. I get tested every year. I can share my results if that would make you feel more relaxed.

Okay, glad we're on the same page!




Not sure how to bring up sexual health with a partner? Use these tips to start the conversation.




Links:

Slide 1: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/images/talk-about-testing-1.png

Slide 2: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/images/talk-about-testing-2.png

Slide 3: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/images/talk-about-testing-3.png

<p>STIs are more common than you might think. The CDC estimates that one in five people has an STI.</p>  <p>Most STIs do not cause symptoms, but they can lead to serious problems like infertility and cancer.</p>  <p>Young people are at high risk of getting certain STIs.</p> <p>Over half of all new STI cases in 2023 were in people aged 15-24.</p> 	<p>Sexually transmitted infections are common, hard to detect, and easy to pass to other people. The only way to know for sure if you have an STI is getting tested. Find confidential, low cost STI testing near you at gettested.cdc.gov/</p> <p>Links:</p> <p>Slide 1: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/images/general-sti-social-1.png</p> <p>Slide 2: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/images/general-sti-social-2.png</p> <p>Slide 3: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/images/general-sti-social-3.png</p> <p>Slide 4: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/images/general-sti-social-4.png</p>
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<p>What you can do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Use a condom or dam every time you have sex.  Communicate with your partner about your STI status.  Get vaccinated. The most common STI, HPV, can be prevented with a vaccine. 		
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News Article

Sample news article

High STI Rates Among Young Adults Highlight the Need for College Students to Seek Testing Resources

Rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea continue to be highest among college-aged students

Many young adults begin navigating their own health care choices for the first time in college, including making important decisions about their sexual health. According to preliminary 2024 Wisconsin surveillance data from the Department of Health Services, individuals aged 15-24 have the highest rate of gonorrhea and chlamydia in Wisconsin. This makes it imperative for college students to follow safe sex practices and get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Gonorrhea and chlamydia are spread through vaginal, oral, or anal sexual contact. These STIs often do not cause signs or symptoms, so individuals may not know they have an infection, and can easily pass an STI from one person to another unknowingly.

Even without symptoms, gonorrhea and chlamydia can cause serious problems. In females, gonorrhea and chlamydia can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) which may lead to problems trying to become pregnant in the future. Untreated STIs in males can sometimes lead to a condition that causes pain and swelling in the testicles and in rare cases, infertility. Getting tested and treated early can prevent serious problems and limit the spread of these STIs.

People who are sexually active can reduce their risk of having an STI by using a condom or dental dam every time they have sex. Other methods of birth control, like IUDs or pills, do not prevent STIs. If a condom is not used, STIs can be spread through all forms of sexual

contact. Initiating open and honest conversations about STI testing can also help students protect their sexual health and foster an environment of safety and respect between partners.

Health officials recommend that all sexually active people are tested once a year, and people falling into certain groups with higher risk, like those with multiple partners or men who have sex with men, get tested more often. Students can find confidential, low-cost STI testing at a doctor's office, family planning clinic, or sexual health clinic. Additionally, STI testing services are available through [campus clinic] at _____ **(fill in address and working hours)**.

Getting tested is the only way to know if you have an STI. Students and young adults can protect their sexual health by getting tested, practicing safe sex, and having open discussions with sexual partner(s). Get more information regarding STIs on the [DHS sexually transmitted infection webpage](#).



Additional Resources

- WI DHS General STI Information: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/std/general-public.htm
- CDC Condom Use and Condom Finder: www.cdc.gov/condom-use/index.html
- CDC STI, HIV and Viral Hepatitis Test Finder: gettested.cdc.gov/

How-to-use condom card

This double-sided card is available for printing on the [DHS sexually transmitted infection page](#) to distribute at outreach events or in clinics.

Want to learn more about condoms?

Scan the QR code for more information about how to use condoms or other barriers to prevent sexually transmitted infections.



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Condom Use: A Step-by-Step Guide

Step 1.

Carefully open and remove condom from packaging.



Step 2.

Place a condom on the head of an erect penis with rim side out.



Step 3.

Pinch the air out of the tip at top of condom.



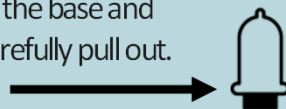
Step 4.

Unroll the condom to the base of the penis while holding the tip.



Step 5.

After sex, hold the condom at the base and carefully pull out.



Step 6.

Gently remove the condom and throw it in the trash.



DHS resources

- [Statewide profile data, 2023](#)
- [Statewide surveillance data, 2023](#)

CDC resources

- Condom Use and Condom Finder: www.cdc.gov/condom-use/index.html
- STI, HIV and Viral Hepatitis Test Finder: gettested.cdc.gov/
- STI Prevention: www.cdc.gov/sti/index.html