

Sexually Transmitted Infections: Causes & Consequences

Chlamydia and LGV

Chlamydia is an infection caused by bacteria. In females, Chlamydia may cause permanent damage to the reproductive organs, ectopic pregnancy, infertility, and death. In males, it may cause discharge from the penis, pain and swelling in the testicles, infection, and infertility. (1,210,523 reported cases in 2008)

Bacterial Vaginosis (BV)*

BV is a condition in females where the normal balance of bacteria in the vagina is disrupted and replaced by an overgrowth of certain bacteria. It is sometimes accompanied by discharge, odor, pain, itching, or burning. BV also increases a woman's risk of infection after major surgery and complications during pregnancy.

HPV/Genital Warts

Genital human papillomavirus (HPV) is an infection that affects the genital areas, mouths, and throats of males and females. It may cause

genital warts, warts in the throat, and cancer. (385,000 cases in 2008 based on initial visits to the physician's office)

Gonorrhea

Gonorrhea is caused by a bacterium that can grow and multiply easily in the warm, moist areas of the reproductive tract, including the cervix, uterus, and fallopian tubes in women, and in the urethra in women and men. The bacterium can also grow in the mouth, throat, eyes, and anus. In females, Gonorrhea may cause painful urination, vaginal discharge, and increased risk of serious complications from infection. In males, Gonorrhea may cause painful urination, discharge from the penis, and painful or swollen testicles. (336,742 reported cases in 2008.)

Herpes

Genital herpes is a virus that causes blisters on or around the genitals or rectum that may break to form ulcers. Herpes may also cause flu-like symptoms and psychological distress. Herpes may be transmitted from a mother to her baby at birth. (292,000 cases in 2008 based on initial visits to the physician's office)

Trichomoniasis

Trichomoniasis is caused by a parasite and usually affects the vagina in females and the urethra in males. Trichomoniasis in males may lead to temporary irritation inside the penis and slight burning after urination or ejaculation. Females may experience vaginal discharge with a strong odor, discomfort during intercourse and urination, and irritation and itching of the female genital area. (204,000 cases in 2008 based on initial visits to the physician's office)

Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)

PID refers to infection of the reproductive organs caused by serious complication of other STDs, especially chlamydia and gonorrhea. PID can lead to permanent damage of the reproductive organs, chronic pelvic pain, infertility, ectopic pregnancy, abscess formation, internal bleeding, and death. (104,000 cases in 2008 based on initial visits to the physician's office)

HIV/AIDS

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is an untreatable virus that destroys blood cells that are crucial to helping the body fight diseases. Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) is the most advanced stage of HIV. HIV/AIDS causes people to get sick

with diseases that would not normally affect them. The disease may lead to depression, neurological disorders, chronic pelvic inflammatory disease, severe infections, growths on the skin or inside the mouth, bleeding from growths on the skin or any opening in the body, paralysis, confusion, and decreased mental abilities. (78,420 diagnoses in 2008)

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2008. Planned Parenthood. 2010.

*Current Statistics Not Available

