

Keep Your Daughter Safe and Healthy: Talk about STDs to Protect Her Reproductive Health

As a parent, YOU are the most important person in your young daughter's life. Two simple conversations could help keep her safe and healthy: one with her and one with her doctor.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are at an all-time high, with more than two million cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis reported in the United States in 2016.¹ Every thirty minutes a woman becomes infertile because of an STD. And the CDC also says sexually active young women under the age of 25 should be tested annually for chlamydia and gonorrhea because the risk is so high.

In 2017, Quest Diagnostics conducted research among young women (15-24) and mothers of young women in that age range regarding young women's sexual behavior, sexual health, and knowledge of and screening for STDs.* The findings were compared to those of similar research conducted in 2015.

These findings may help facilitate conversations with your daughter and with her primary doctor.



1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016 Sexually Transmitted Diseases Surveillance, <https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats16/default.htm>

Mothers and Daughters Aren't Hearing Each Other



Eight out of ten

mothers say they and their daughters have discussed:

- 88% Risk of STDs
- 86% Having safe sex
- 86% Using birth control
- 84% Going to an OBGYN
- 82% Delaying sexual activity until over the age of 18

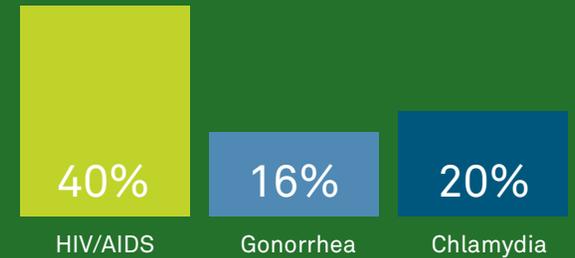


Yet, only one in three

young women say their mothers have talked to them about these issues.

Young Women Don't Comprehend the Risks of Common STDs

Despite large increases in cases of gonorrhea and chlamydia, **young women are twice as concerned about HIV/AIDS** compared with gonorrhea or chlamydia.



56% of **young women** report that they are sexually active.

26% of **young women** age 15-17 say they are sexually active.

BUT ONLY

47% of **mothers** believe their daughter is sexually active.

BUT ONLY

17% of **mothers** with daughters in that age range believe their daughters are sexually active.



Did You Know:

- The vast majority of STDs don't have any physical symptoms. The only way to know for sure if an individual has an STD is to test.
- Most STDs are highly curable if identified at an early stage.
- If not caught and treated in early stages, STDs can lead to chronic pelvic pain, susceptibility to other sexually transmitted infections, and infertility.

Young Women Prefer to be Alone with their Clinician when Talking about Sex and STDs...

88%
of females
(15-24 years)

91%
of females
(15-17 years)



would prefer to **be alone with their clinician** when talking about sex or STDs, rather than having their mother in the room.

97%
of **mothers understand** their daughter's need for privacy at doctor visits

but **35%**
still **spend some or all of the time in the exam room** during their daughters' visits.

...But They Are Still Uncomfortable Talking/Being Honest with their Healthcare Practitioners about their Sexual Health.

51% don't want to bring up sex or STDs with doctor/nurse.

27% don't always tell truth about sex history to doctor/nurse.



Many Young Women Say They Haven't Been Tested for STDs.

Only about half of young women (56%) say they **have been tested** for an STD.

Forty-nine percent of young women have **never been asked if they want STD testing** by their clinician, and **72 percent** have **not requested it**.

Three-quarters (74%) of **young women** and **62 percent** of **mothers** would **feel less embarrassed about testing if their doctor told them everyone got tested**.

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What You Can Do:

TALK to your daughter about her reproductive health. Let her know that it's very important to protect herself from the risk of infection, to be completely honest with her healthcare team, and to ask to be screened for STDs every year.

TALK to your daughter's doctor. S/he may not know if you want your daughter screened for STDs. Let her/him know that you support annual medical guideline-based STD testing for your daughter.

Research was conducted by Aurora Research & Consulting on behalf of Quest Diagnostics in December, 2017. A total of 4,742 study respondents, comprised of 3,414 young women between the ages of 15-24, of whom 1,500 self-identified as sexually active; 1,016 mothers of young women in that age group; and 312 primary care, OB/GYN and specialty physicians were surveyed. Most clinician survey data presented in this report was of responses of 100 primary care physicians. Each respondent completed 15- to 30-minute online surveys regarding perceptions and knowledge of STDs and chlamydia and gonorrhea testing. Strengths of the research include the large number of respondents and the research's national scale, while limitations include self-reported data and a lack of direct comparability between study populations. The 2017 research was complemented by results of a survey of similar cohort of patients and healthcare practitioners performed in 2015. For more information, please refer to www.QuestDiagnostics.com.

Some localities may require reporting to authorities by health care providers where cases of child abuse are suspected.