



HERPES, SHIGELLA, GENITAL WARTS AND CRABS: AN EASY READ GUIDE



The PaSH  Partnership

Passionate about Sexual Health across Greater Manchester



WELCOME

This is a straightforward guide about LGBTQ+ sexual health. It's been made for people with learning difficulties and those who support them.

Talking about sex can be hard, but it's important to know how to have safer sex. This guide will help you learn about LGBTQ+ sexual health, safer sex, and where to find support.

Everyone deserves to have a fulfilling and safe sex life, no matter who they are. Let's start learning!

We want to say a big thank you to the amazing community and team at Better Things for their valuable contributions to this resource. We would also like to thank the community for providing lived experiences, feedback, insights, and support that helped us create this easy read resource.



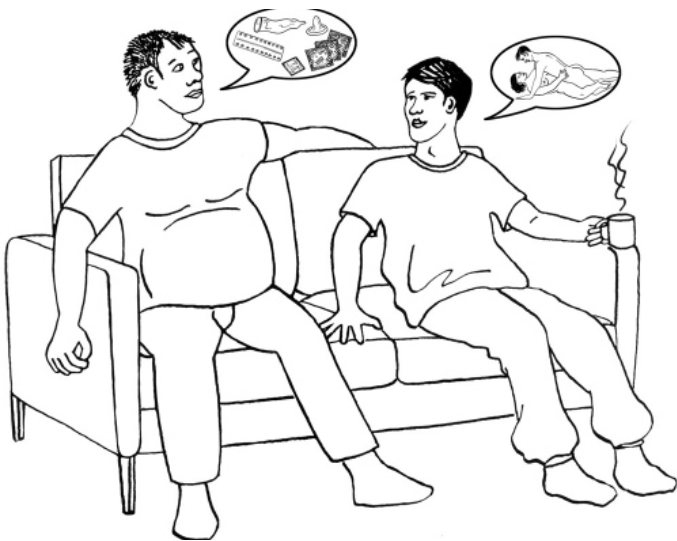
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What is Herpes?



Herpes is a virus that anyone can get if they are sexually active.



Herpes is common and you can be treated for it easily. If you have herpes it's important to tell your sexual partner(s) especially when you have an outbreak.

How is Herpes Passed On?



You can get herpes through skin contact with someone who has it.

This can happen by:

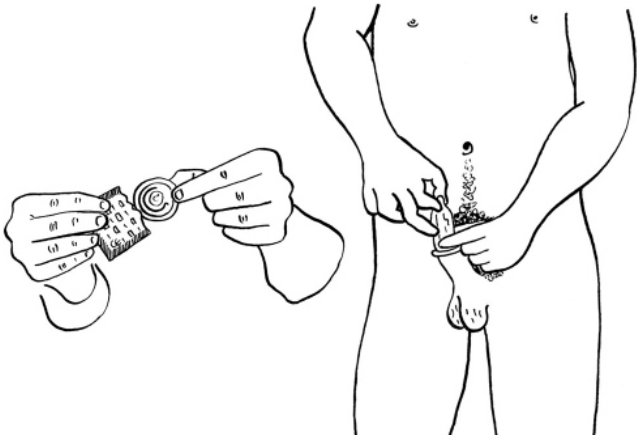
- Touching someone's front hole/ vagina, penis or bum.
- Having sex.
- Sharing sex toys.



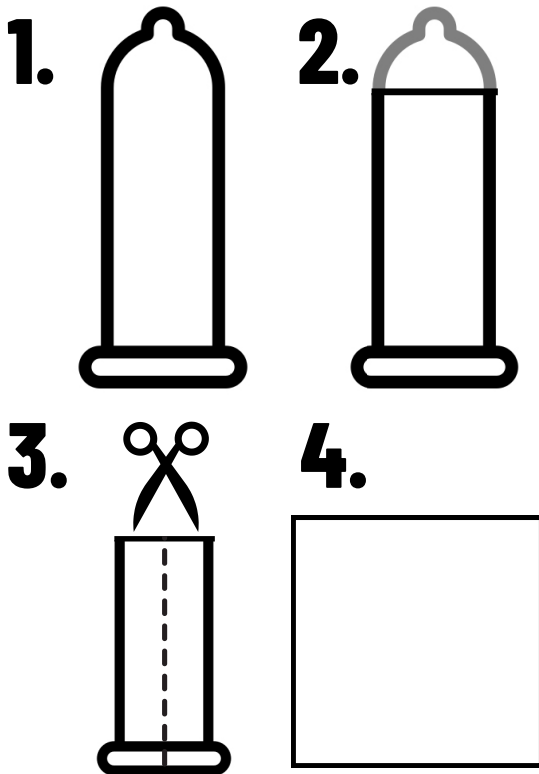
People who have herpes don't pass it on to other people all the time.

They can only pass it on when there is an 'outbreak' of herpes spots (called Herpes sores).

How to Prevent Herpes



To prevent the spread of herpes you can use condoms on penises and sex toys. You should always use a new condom if you are using a new hole.



You can also use dental dams for rimming and oral sex.

You can make one by cutting the end off of a condom and then cutting it down the middle to make a square sheet.

You can use this to protect yourself from STIs by putting it on your partner's vagina/front hole or bum hole.



Using condoms, dental dams and gloves is not 100% effective. Using these will only protect you from the covered place.

How to Prevent Herpes

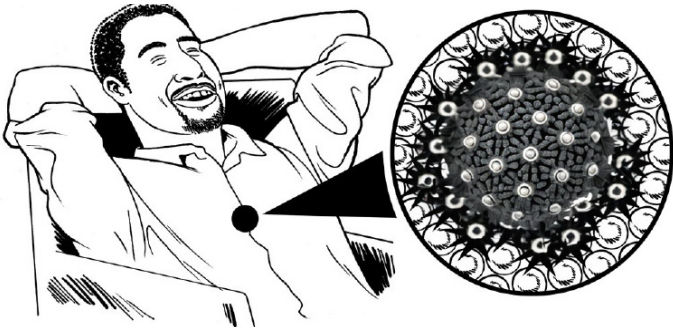


You can use gloves for your hands or fingers if you are fingering or fisting someone to help prevent the spread of STIs.

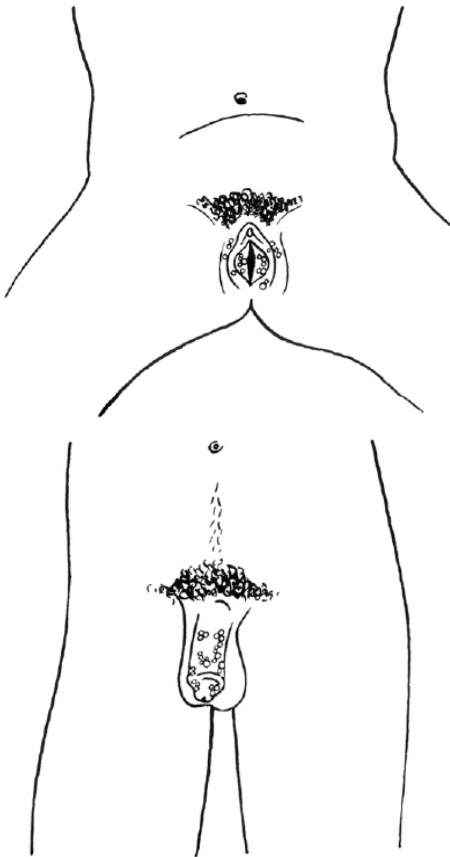


If you do touch a herpes sore it is best to wash your hands or the area that the spot has touched you.

Herpes Symptoms



Many people who get herpes won't have any symptoms unless they have an outbreak.



Symptoms include:

- Small spots that pop and leave red sores around your private areas.
- Pain when peeing, pooing or having sex.
- Feeling unwell.
- Having aches and pain in the body.
- Flu-like symptoms.
- Painful or itchy penis or vagina/ front hole.



Symptoms can come and go over time, but just because you can't see any sores doesn't mean you have been cured.

Testing and Treating: Herpes



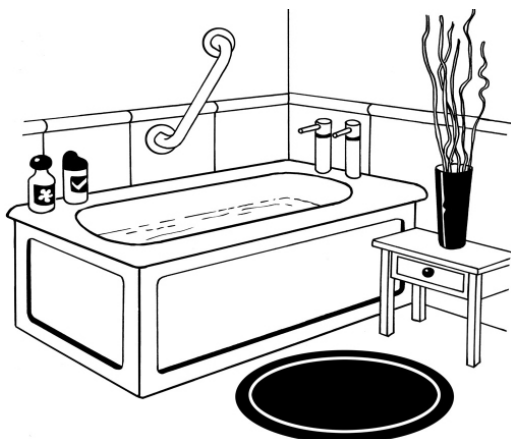
You can only test for herpes when you have symptoms, so if you get any sores, get tested at a local sexual health clinic.



To test for herpes, a doctor or nurse will take a cotton swab of the spots to test. You will receive results in 1 - 2 weeks.

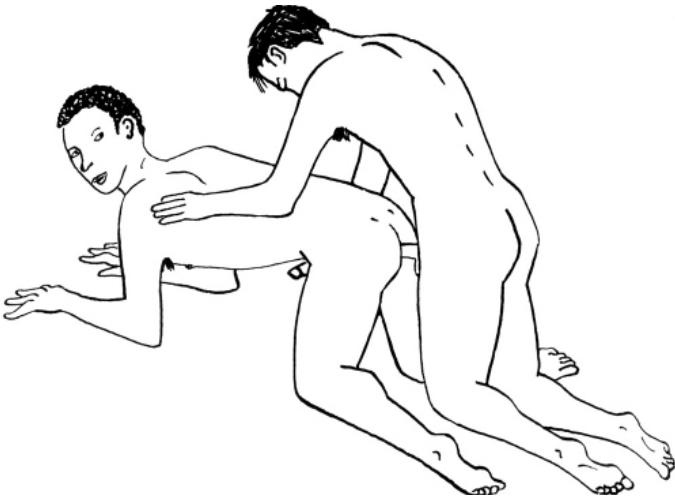


If you have herpes, you can take tablets to help make you feel better.



You can also use painkillers or a salt water bath to help any pain you might be in.

What is Shigella?



Shigella is bacteria that is passed on through having sex with someone who already has Shigella.



Anyone can get Shigella, but it is more common for men who have sex with men.

How is Shigella Passed On?



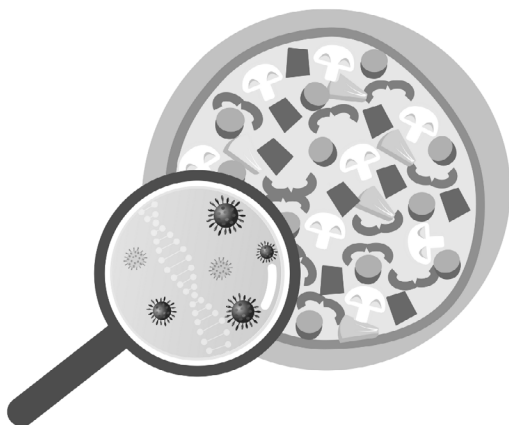
Shigella is caused by tiny bacteria that live in poo, and if you get this in your mouth it can cause you to get sick.



During sex, you may get a small amount of poo on you which you can't even see. If you get this in your body you might get shigella.



Touching condoms, sex toys, fingering and rimming can also pass on shigella.

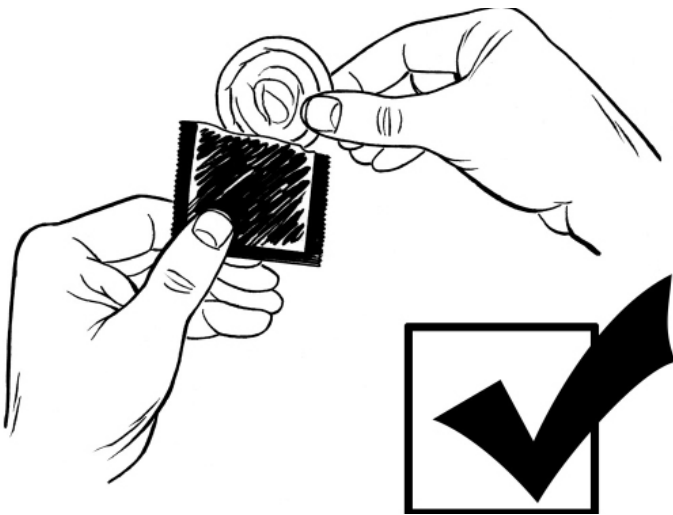


You can also sometimes get shigella from food that has been made by someone who has shigella.

Preventing Shigella



Washing your hands after sex can help lower your risk of getting shigella. You can also take a shower and wash your bum and front hole/vagina or penis after sex.



You can use condoms on penises and sex toys to help stop getting shigella. Always use a new condom if you are using a new hole. You can also use dental dams for oral sex.



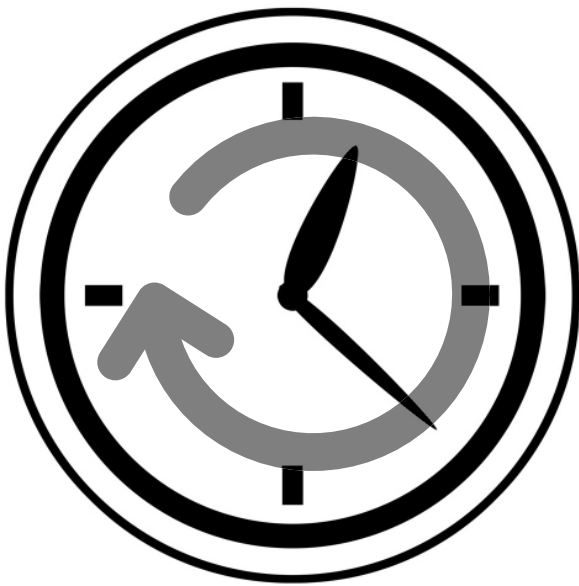
You can use gloves for your hands or fingers if you are fingering or fisting someone to help keep safe.

Shigella Symptoms



The main symptoms if you get shigella are:

- Upset stomach
- Fever
- Cramps and stomach ache
- Sometimes bloody diarrhea



Symptoms begin about 12 hours to 4 days after you have gotten it.

Testing and Treating: Shigella



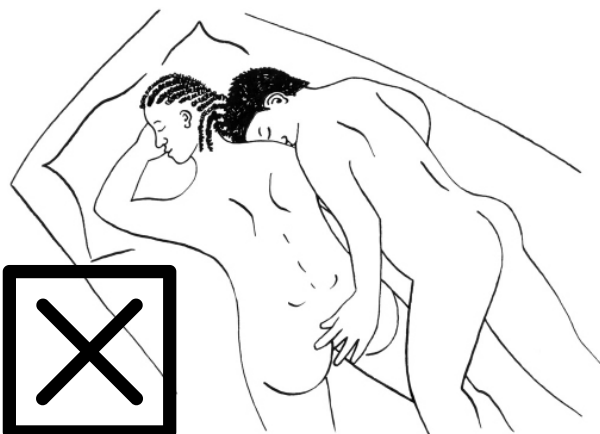
You can get tested at a local sexual health clinic, GP or local testing site if you think you may have shigella.



To test for shigella, a doctor or nurse will take a sample of stool (poo) that can be tested.

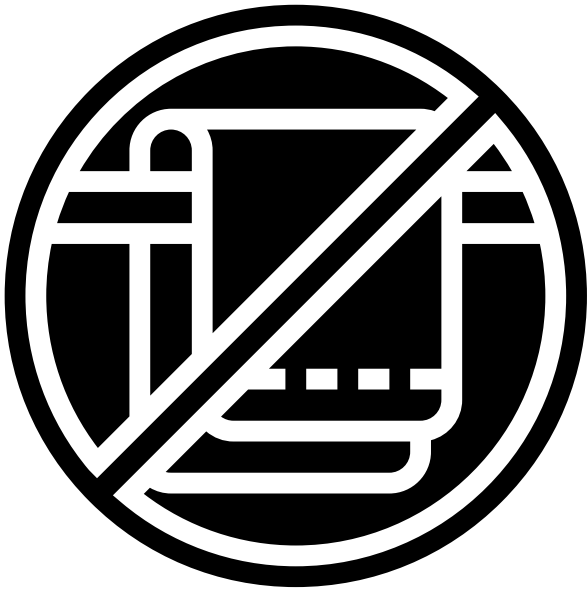


If you test positive for shigella, it is easily treated with antibiotic tablets.

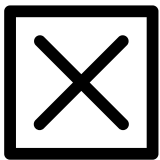


You should not have sex and not make food for others until you have finished taking your medicine.

Testing and Treating: Shigella



You should not share towels and make sure you clean your taps, door handles, toilet seats and hands with hot soapy water.

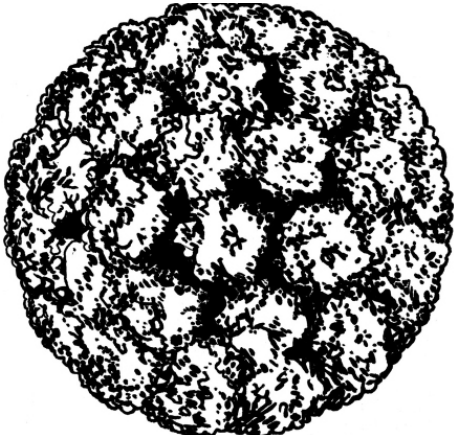


If you work in a place where you make food or will be around people who are sick (like a hospital or care home), you should avoid going to work until you're better.



Once all your symptoms have gone you will be able to have sex and go back to work and not get other people sick.

What are Genital Warts?



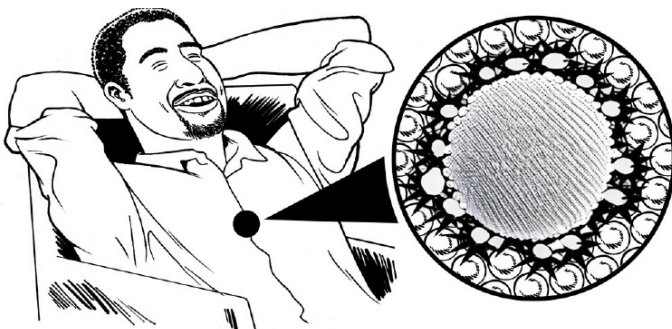
Genital warts are caused by HPV (human papillomavirus) which has many different strains (types) but only some make you sick.



Genital warts are small bumps that can appear around your front hole/ vagina, penis and bum.



You can be treated for genital warts with medicine that stops them from coming back.

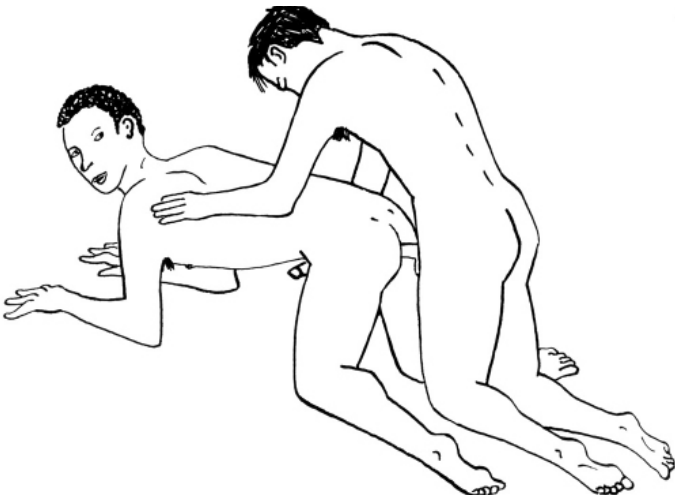


Genital warts are very common, and not everyone who gets them will have warts appear on their body. You can have it for months or years before you see any warts.

How Genital Warts are Passed On



Genital warts are spread through skin to skin contact. This means that having sex increases the chance you could get HPV.

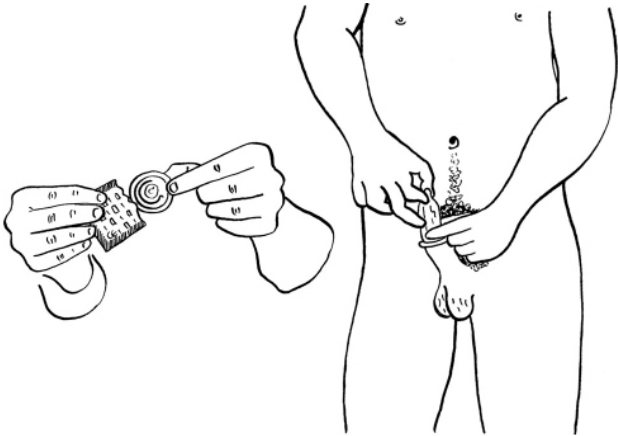


This includes oral, anal and vaginal sex, touching penises and vaginas, and sharing sex toys with a partner(s).

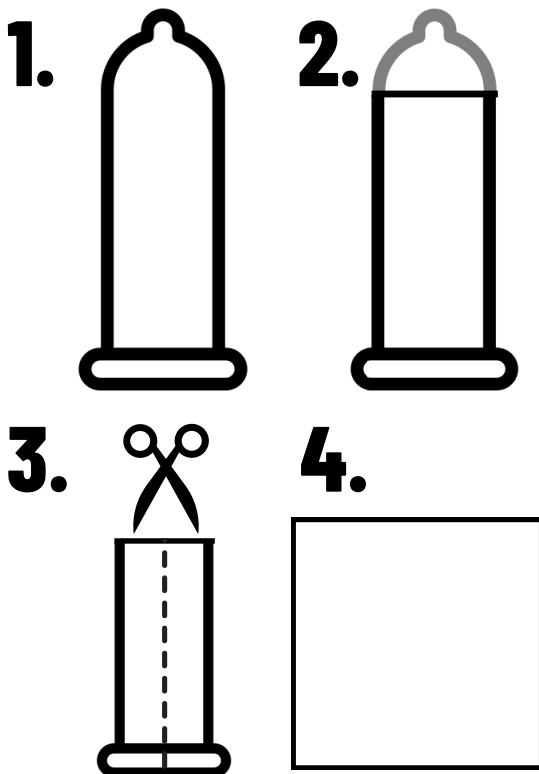


Genital warts can be passed on even when you don't have any symptoms. It can not be passed on through items like towels, cups or toilet seats.

Preventing Genital Warts



To prevent the spread of genital warts you can use condoms on penises and sex toys. You should use a new condom if you are using a new hole.



You can also use dental dams for rimming and oral sex.

You can make it by cutting the end off of a condom and then cutting it down the middle to make a square sheet.

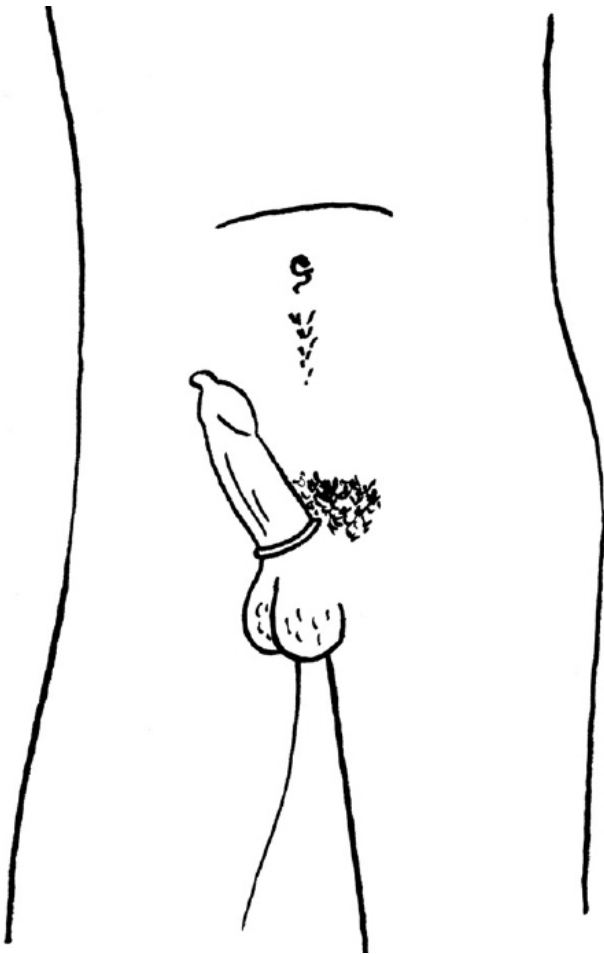
You can use this to protect yourself from STIs by placing it on a vagina/front hole or bum hole.



You can use gloves for your hands or fingers if you are fingering or fisting someone to help prevent the spread of STIs.

Preventing Genital Warts

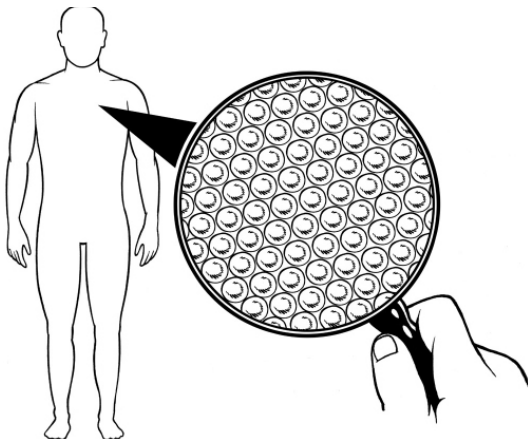
Using condoms, dental dams and gloves is not 100% effective. Using these will only protect you from the covered area, so you may still get genital warts.



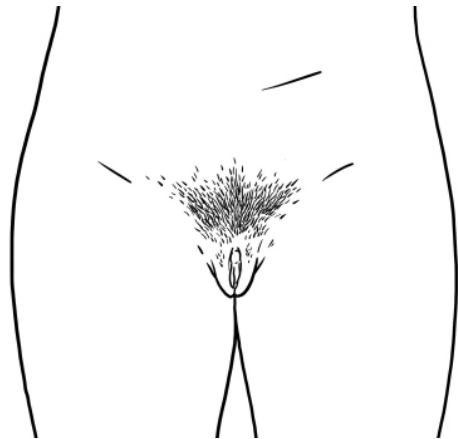
Preventing Genital Warts



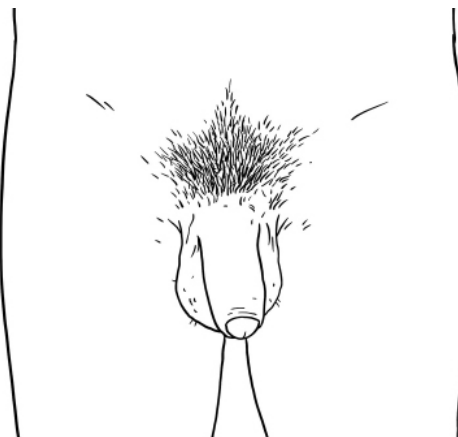
The main symptom of genital warts is the spots. These are small growths, lumps or bumps that are usually flat, smooth or lumpy. The spots are painless to touch.



They can sometimes be very small or even inside your body, so you may not always see them.



If you have a front hole/vagina, you may find the genital warts on the vulva, labia (vaginal lips), in the vagina and/or on the cervix.



If you have a penis, the genital warts may appear on the penis, tip of the penis and on your balls (testicles).

Testing & Treating: Genital Warts



If you think you have genital warts you should go to a local sexual health clinic, GP or community testing location.



A doctor or nurse will take a look at the area to check and confirm if you have genital warts.



Genital warts and HPV cannot be cured, but it can be treated when warts appear on your body.



The treatment options for genital warts are:

- Cream to help heal the warts
- Freezing them off
- Heating them off
- In some special cases, you may require surgery

Testing & Treating: Genital Warts



Apart from this, you can also get a vaccine that protects you against HPV.



For people with penises, you can get this vaccine up until your 45th birthday if you have sex with men.



For people with front holes/vaginas, you may have gotten this vaccine when you were in high school in Year 8.



If you haven't gotten the vaccine you can get it for free from the NHS until your 25th birthday if you were born after 1st September 1991.

Testing & Treating: Genital Warts

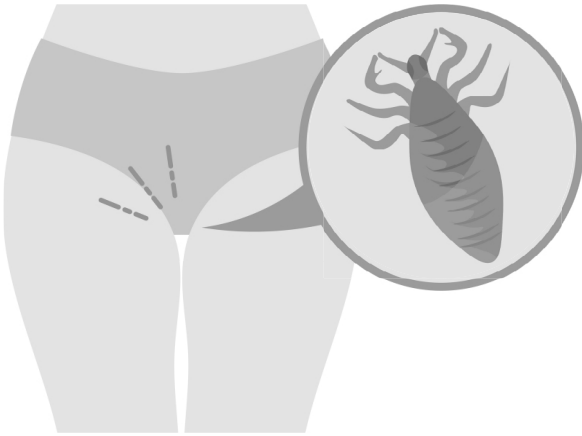


This vaccine protects you against HPV which causes genital warts and also some kinds of cancer.



If you want the vaccine you can contact your GP or local sexual health clinic for more information.

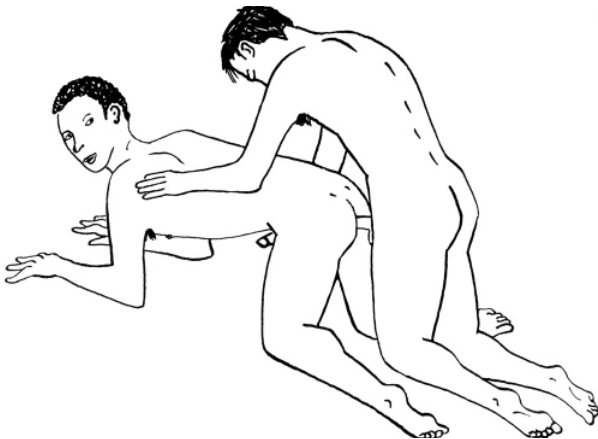
What are Pubic Lice?



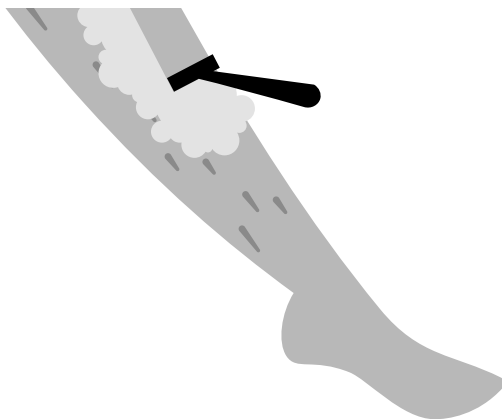
Crabs - sometimes called pubic lice - are small parasites that live on pubic hair.



They can also live on your armpit hair, leg hair, eyebrows and eyelashes but not on your head.



Crabs are spread mostly through sexual contact. Anyone can get crabs, but you are more likely to get it if you have multiple sexual partners at one time.



Shaving and waxing your pubic hair won't make you any less likely to get crabs.

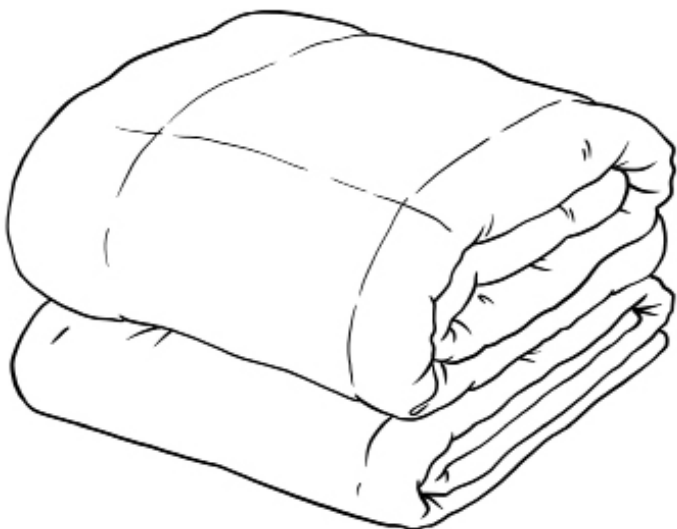
How are Public Lice Passed On?



Crabs can be spread through sexual contact, having sex, or being close to someone when you're both naked.

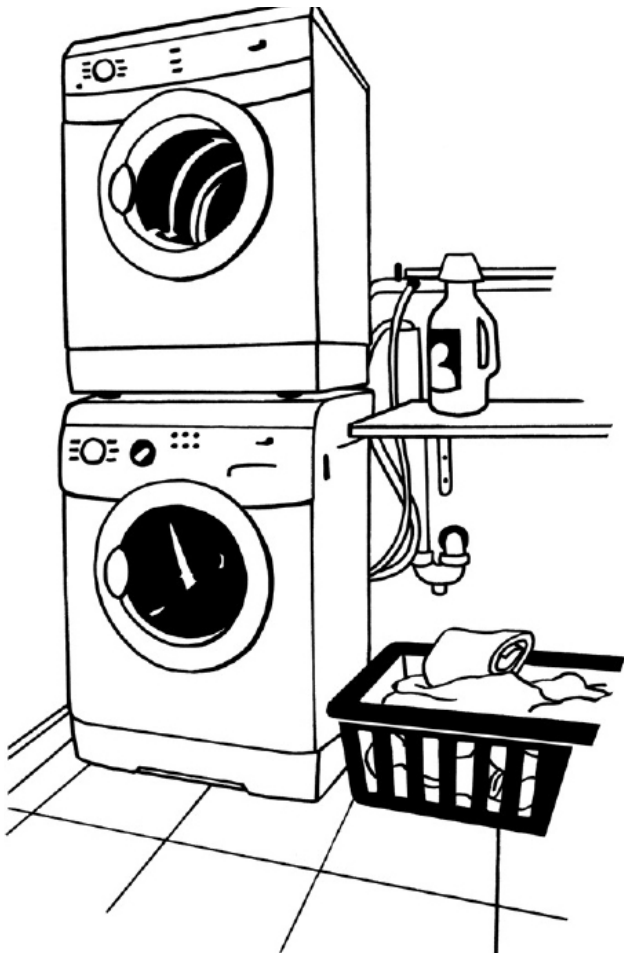


Crabs cannot jump or fly, so you have to be in direct contact with someone who has crabs to get them.



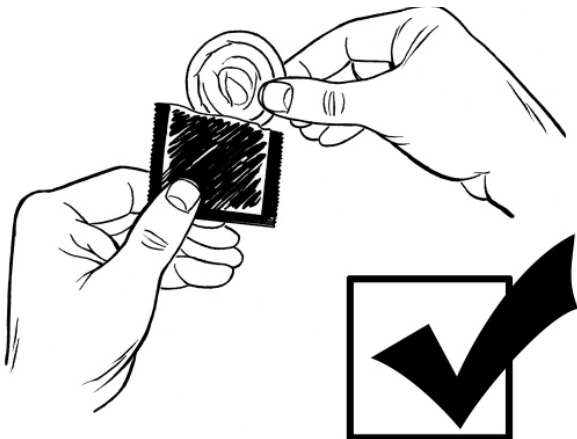
Sometimes crabs can be spread through sharing bedding and towels, but this is rare as crabs don't live long when they aren't on the body.

Preventing Pubic Lice



If you have crabs, you can prevent them from being spread by:

- Washing clothes and bedding on 50 degrees or higher
- Put your clothes and bedding in a tied up plastic bag for a week
- Hoover your mattress to remove any crabs



Using condoms doesn't protect you from getting crabs, but should still be worn to prevent getting other STIs.



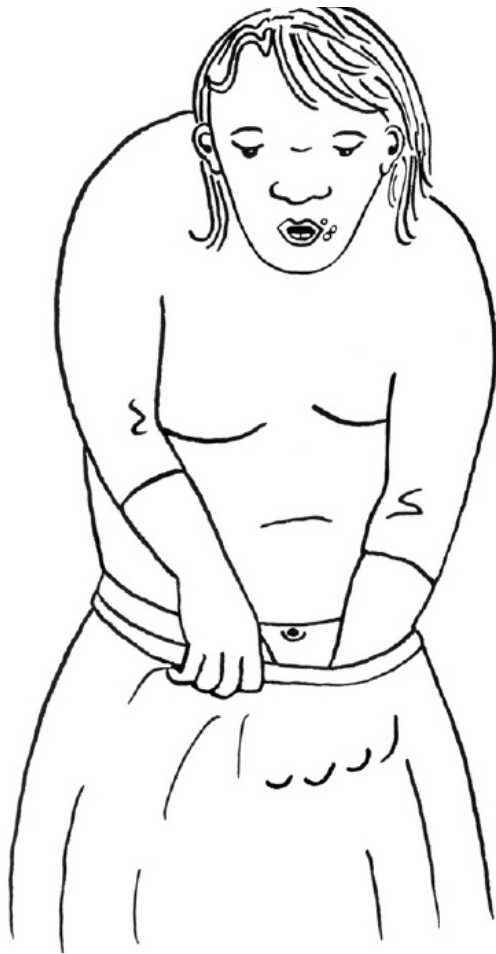
If you or a partner have crabs, you should avoid sexual contact until you have gotten rid of them.



Pubic Lice Symptoms

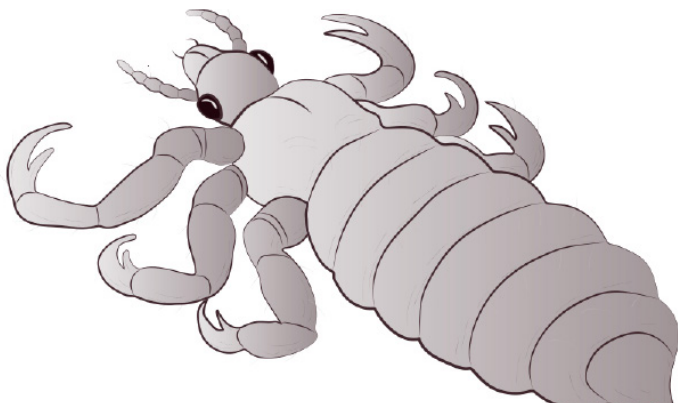
The main symptoms of crabs include:

- Itching around your crotch/bum, which is usually worse at night
- Red marks on your skin from scratching



- Black powder in your underwear
- Blue spots or small spots of blood on your skin caused by crab bites

- You may see the crabs in your pubic hair, but they are very small



Testing & Treatment: Pubic Lice



You can go to a GP or local sexual health clinic to get tested by a doctor or nurse who will check the area where you think you have crabs.



They will use a magnifying glass to see if you do have crabs. If you do have crabs, it is a good idea to book a full STI test to see if you have any other infections.



You will be given a special shampoo to use over a few days to kill off the crabs. You can ask a GP or pharmacist for help with the instructions.

USEFUL INFORMATION

The Passionate about Sexual Health Partnership (PaSH) is a collaboration of BHA for Equality, George House Trust, and LGBT Foundation.

LGBT Foundation provides support to LGBTQ+ individuals. They offer free STI and HIV testing in the centre of Manchester's Gay Village and you can order testing kits, condoms, and lube for free to your home. They also give advice and information on sexual health.

You can find more information on their website at lgbt.foundation/testing or if you are looking for advice and support email sexualhealth@lgbt.foundation or call **0345 3 30 30 30**.



BHA for Equality is a charity that helps people with health and social care needs, including services for HIV and sexual health, cancer, TB, mental health, and community health education. They offer free community testing for HIV, HIV testing kits, and free condoms and lube for Black, Asian or other ethnic minority residents of Greater Manchester.

Visit their website at thebha.org.uk and you can call or email for support at **0330 1281186** or **info@thebha.org.uk**



George House Trust has provided support and advocacy services for people living with HIV since 1985. They help people live well and confidently with HIV and keep good physical and mental health.

For more information you can go to **George House Trust's website** at ght.org.uk/ or you can call or email at **0161 274 4499** or **talk@ght.org.uk**



WE'RE HERE TO EMPOWER, ENCOURAGE AND CELEBRATE OUR WONDERFUL LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

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