



WELLNESS WORKSHEET 102

Do Your Attitudes and Behaviors Put You at Risk for STDs?

Part I. Risk Assessment

All sexually transmitted diseases are preventable. You have control over the behaviors and attitudes that place you at risk for contracting STDs and for increasing their negative effects on your health. To identify your risk factors for STDs, read the following list of statements and identify whether they're true or false for you.

Note: The statements in this assessment assume current sexual activity. If you have never been sexually active, you are not now at risk for STDs. Respond to the statements in the quiz based on how you realistically believe you would act. If you are currently in a mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner or are not currently sexually active (but have been in the past), you are at low risk for STDs at this time. Respond to the statements in the quiz according to your attitudes and past behaviors.

True False

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. I have only one sex partner. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. I always use a latex condom for each act of intercourse, even if I am fairly certain my partner has no infections. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. I do not use oil-based lubricants or other oil-based products with condoms. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. I discuss STDs and prevention with new partners before having sex. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. I do not use alcohol or another mood-altering drug in sexual situations. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. I would tell my partner if I thought I had been exposed to an STD. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. I am familiar with the signs and symptoms of STDs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. I regularly perform genital self-examination to check for signs and symptoms of STDs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. When I notice any sign or symptom of any STD, I consult my physician immediately. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. I obtain screening for HIV and other STDs regularly. In addition (if female), I obtain yearly pelvic exams and Pap tests. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. When diagnosed with an STD, I inform all recent partners. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. When I have a sign or symptom of an STD that goes away on its own, I still consult my physician. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. I do not use drugs prescribed for friends or partners or left over from other illnesses to treat STDs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. I do not share syringes or needles to inject drugs. |

False answers indicate attitudes and behaviors that may put you at risk for contracting STDs or for suffering serious medical consequences from them. For more on your risk factors for STDs, take the online assessment available at <http://www.thebody.com>.

(over)

Part II. Communication

1. List three ways to bring up the subject of STDs with a new partner. How would you ask whether he or she has been exposed to any STDs or engaged in any risky behaviors? (Remember that because many STDs can be asymptomatic, it is important to know about past behaviors even if no STD was diagnosed.)

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. List three ways to bring up the subject of condom use with your partner. How might you convince someone who does not want to use a condom?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

3. If you had an STD in the past that you might possibly still pass on (e.g., herpes), how would you tell your partner(s)?

4. If you were diagnosed with an STD that you believe was given to you by your current partner, how would you begin a discussion of STDs with him or her?

Talking about STDs may be a bit awkward, but the temporary embarrassment of asking intimate questions is a small price to pay to avoid contracting or spreading disease.