

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

wildfact

There are over 25 different organisms that can cause an STD.

Q Are different STDs more common at different ages? (teens, adults, elderly)

A. If you are sexually active with someone who has a sexually transmitted disease (STD), it can be transmitted regardless if you're a teenager or a senior citizen. It's hard to answer this great question because doctors are only required to report cases of gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis to their local or state public health authorities. Other common STDs such as genital warts (HPV) and herpes are not required to be reported. So, the STD data that we have only represents a portion of all STDs.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), young people (15-24) have four times the reported chlamydia and gonorrhea rate of the total population (10-65+). Adults (20-44) have two times the reported syphilis rates of those ages 15-19. The CDC also receives confidential name-based HIV infection reports from 40 states.

In 2009, people age 13-29 accounted for 34% of all new HIV infections. People 50 years and older comprised 16% of new HIV infections. Recent statistics show HIV is increasing within the 50+ population.

Remember, these statistics are just the number of *reported* cases. It doesn't account for the many people who are sexually active and do not get tested. Stay on top of your sexual health; if you're sexually active – get tested.

In the U.S. there are an estimated 19 million new infections every year; approximately 2 out of every 3 people who get an STD are under the age of 25. And, although the prevalence of STDs is higher among individuals under 25, we know that adults and senior citizens are increasingly staying sexually active (maybe with the help of drugs like Viagra), contributing to the high rates of STDs in the United States.

Whatever age you are, it's important to use protection if you're sexually active. Condoms and dental dams are great options to reduce the risk of contracting or transmitting STDs.



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