

What can I do if I think I might be pregnant?

If your period is at least three days late and you think you may be pregnant you can take a pregnancy test. These tests take only a few minutes and are available at SHine SA clinics, health centres, your local doctor, pharmacies and some supermarkets.

What can I do if I am sexually assaulted?

Sexual assault is any unwanted touching, fondling, masturbation or any actions of a sexual kind that makes a person feel unsafe.

Consent to sexual activity must be voluntary. It is unlawful to force or pressure someone into any sexual activity. Sometimes you may not be sure if a rape or sexual assault has happened to you. Trust your gut feelings. You haven't said 'Yes' to sex if:

- you were threatened or bullied into having sex
- you were asleep or unconscious
- you had been drinking or taking drugs and you were not aware of what was going on

Survivors of sexual assault may feel guilt or shame, and may fear how others will react. Sexual assault is about power and not sex. Remember it's not your fault, and finding a safe person to tell may help you. There's support available – see the contacts below.

For further information

Clinic 275 (STI health checks)	8222 5075
Country callers (toll free)	1800 806 490
SHine SA's Sexual Healthline	1300 883 793
Country callers (toll free)	1800 188 171
Yarrow Place (rape and sexual assault)	8226 8777
Youth Healthline	1300 13 17 19

Contact SHine SA

Clinic & Counselling Appointments and General Enquiries

Tel: **1300 794 584**
Clinics are located throughout the metropolitan area.

Sexual Healthline

Talk to a sexual health nurse about any sexual health issue. Available 9 am – 1 pm, Monday – Friday

Tel: **1300 883 793**
Country callers (toll free): 1800 188 171
Email: sexualhealthhotline@health.sa.gov.au

Website

www.shinesa.org.au

National Relay Service: www.relayservice.com.au
133 677 (TTY/Voice) 1300 555 727 (Speak & Listen)

Safer sex

SEXUAL HEALTH INFORMATION
NETWORKING & EDUCATION SA



What is safer sex?

Safer sex means choosing sexual behaviours which:

- show respect
- you find pleasurable
- are emotionally healthy
- always have the consent of both partners
- reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- reduce the risk of unplanned pregnancy
- do not assault, exploit or harm another person

We talk about safer sex, as there's no guarantee that sex is 100% safe, but there are ways to reduce the risks.

Should I talk to my partner about safer sex?

Talking to your partner about safer sex is not always easy. You may feel awkward or uncomfortable. But talking about safer sex is a sign of respect. It shows you care about your health and the wellbeing of your partner.

It's essential to make sure that you have your partner's consent for any sexual activity. The only way to do that is to ask and never assume! Talk openly about the things you want and don't want. Listen to each other and agree together about what's OK to happen next.

What if I'm not into it?

Sex is *never* an obligation. It's something you should enjoy. Safer sex means both partners experience pleasure. So if you're not into it for any reason *it's your right to say no at any time*. It's OK to ask to stop. This includes during sex, especially if you feel physical pain or emotional discomfort.

Sex may not be pleasurable for different reasons, including position, inflammation, previous traumatic experience, lack of lubrication, or limited foreplay. It may be a one-off thing, but if you have persistent difficulties it may be worth talking to a doctor, nurse or sexual health counsellor.

If a partner asks you to stop you *must* respect this.

How can I look after myself emotionally?

Practising safer sex also means looking after yourself emotionally. This means you choose:

- when you're ready to start having sex
- when you want to have sex
- when you don't want to have sex
- who to have sex with
- how to have sex

It's important to take your time and make sure that you're making choices that are right for you. Discuss these with your partner. There are plenty of ways to be close to someone without having intercourse.

Drugs and alcohol can affect your judgment when it comes to sex and may lead to unprotected sex, sexual assault or situations that cause physical or emotional harm.

Safer sex means choosing safety, pleasure and respect.

How can I reduce the risk of STIs?

Sexually transmitted infections are infections caused by micro-organisms (germs) which spread from person to person during vaginal, anal and oral sex. You can reduce the risk of STIs by using condoms, which prevent the transfer of semen and vaginal fluids. They won't protect against STIs if the infection is on an unprotected part of the body and skin-to-skin contact occurs. Dams (latex sheets) can reduce the risk of STIs during oral sex.

How do I use a condom correctly?

A condom must be put on before sexual contact occurs to be effective, as pre-cum (fluid released when a penis is erect) can contain sperm and transmit infection. Using water-based lubricant can prevent the condom breaking and make sex more pleasurable. For more information see SHine SA's *Condoms* leaflet.

What if I didn't use a condom?

If you have had unprotected sex consider having an STI check. Also, if you're worried about getting pregnant you can take emergency contraception (EC). It's most effective if taken in the first 24 hours, but can be taken up to 5 days (120 hours) after unprotected sex to reduce the risk of pregnancy. EC tablets are available over the counter at pharmacies, SHine SA clinics, Clinic 275 and some public hospital Emergency Departments.

How do I know if I have an STI?

Signs of an STI can include:

- an unusual discharge from the penis or vagina
- rashes, blisters, lumps or sores in the genital area or sometimes the mouth
- deep pain in the stomach
- pain when urinating

However, *not all STIs have symptoms*, so often you can't tell if your partner has an infection. You could also have an STI and not even know it! That's why it's important for you and your partner to have a sexual health check.

Testing is simple. Often all you need is a urine test. And the good news is that many STIs are easily treated.

How can I reduce the risk of unplanned pregnancy?

You can use contraception to reduce the risk of unplanned pregnancy. There are many options available for women. It's a good idea to discuss these with your doctor, visit a community health centre or local SHine SA clinic. Further information can be obtained by contacting SHine SA's Sexual Healthline or from the SHine SA website. Men can use a condom to prevent pregnancy. Condoms are the only contraceptive that will reduce the risk of both pregnancy and STIs.