

Sexual health



Language

- We take a broad and inclusive approach to the topic of women's health.
- We write health information for people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and identities. We use the terms 'women' and 'girls', but we acknowledge that these terms are not inclusive of all people who may use our content.



Presentation aims

By the end of this presentation, we hope you will:

- know about safer sex practices and why they are important
- be aware of contraception options
- know how to deal with an unplanned pregnancy.





STIs and safer sex

Sexually transmissible infections (STIs)

- Infections that are passed from person to person through sexual contact.
- Can have serious impacts on your health if left untreated.
- Anyone can get an STI.



How do you know if you have an STI?



Common symptoms include:

- itchiness, blisters, ulcers, sores, or warts around the vagina, penis or anus
- pain when weeing or during sex
- unusual discharge or bleeding from the vagina, penis or anus.

Not all STIs cause symptoms – regular STI checks are the **only way** to know for sure.

When should you have an STI check?

- If you are sexually active, have at least one STI check per year.
- Have more frequent STI checks if:
 - you have any symptoms
 - you have a new sexual partner
 - your partner has an STI
 - you have had unprotected sex.



What happens when you have an STI check?

- Your doctor or nurse will ask questions about your health, sex life, and symptoms.
- They will do some tests.
- You will get your results in 1–2 weeks.



What if you have an STI?

- Go to your doctor to get the right treatment.
- Tell your recent sexual partner(s).

Most STIs can be cured, and all can be treated with medicine.



What is safer sex?

- Sex that is respectful, enjoyable and safe.
- It reduces your risk of getting an STI.
- It includes:
 - using condoms and dental dams when having sex
 - regular STI checks
 - open communication with your sexual partner(s)
 - consent.





Contraception

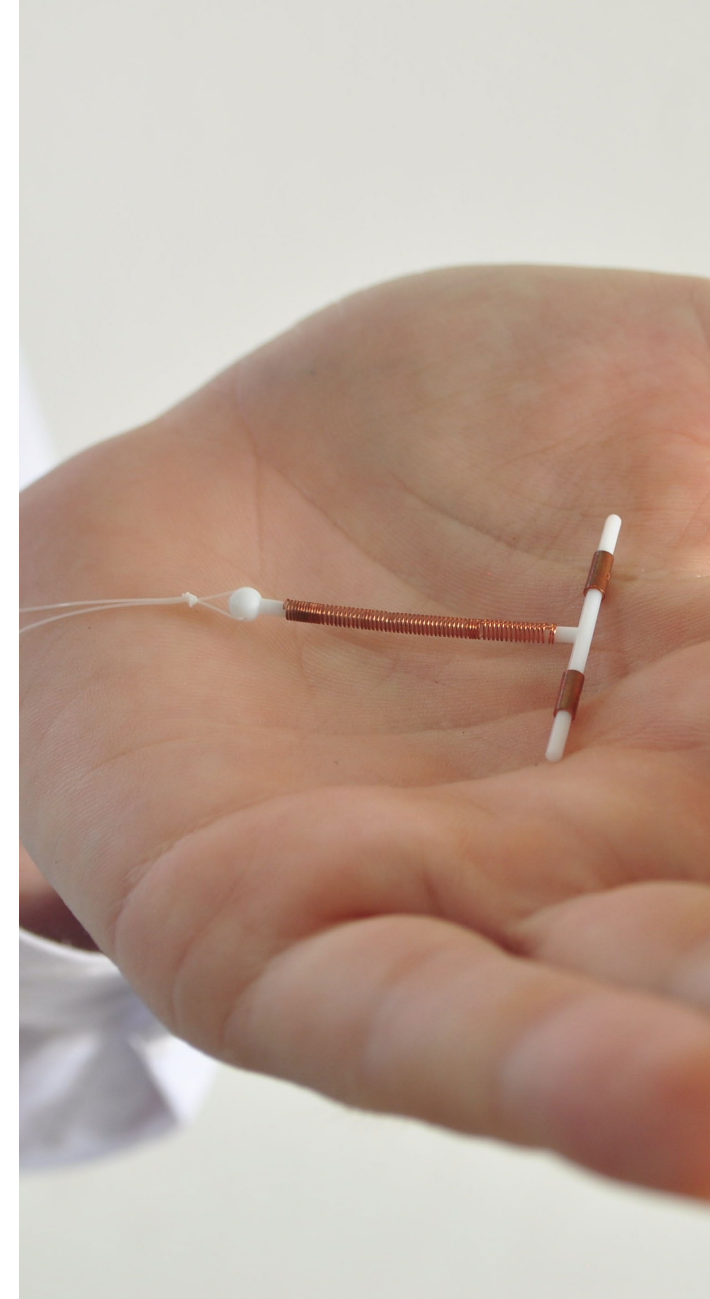
Contraception

Something you use when you have sex but don't want to get pregnant.



Long-acting contraception

- Most effective types of contraception at preventing pregnancy.
- Can be effective for weeks, months or years.
- Common options include:
 - contraceptive implants (Implanon)
 - intrauterine devices (Mirena®, Kyleena® or copper intrauterine device)
 - vaginal ring
 - hormonal injections (Depo).



Other methods of contraception

- Condoms
- Contraceptive pills
- Diaphragm



Other methods of contraception

- Fertility awareness methods
- Withdrawal method
- Permanent contraception
- Emergency contraception



Things to remember about contraception

- Long-acting contraception is the most effective at preventing pregnancy.
- Condoms are the only type of contraception that also protect against STIs.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse about your contraception options.





Unplanned pregnancy and abortion

Unplanned pregnancy

Unplanned pregnancies are common in Australia.



Unplanned pregnancy – what are your options?

- Abortion
- Parenting
- Adoption
- Alternative or kinship care

Remember, it's **your** choice.



Abortion

Ending a pregnancy either by surgery or by taking medicine.



Access to abortion in Australia

- Abortion is **legal** in Australia.
- It's harder to get an abortion the further along your pregnancy is.
- Contact your local sexual health centre for more information about accessing abortion in your state or territory.





Reproductive coercion

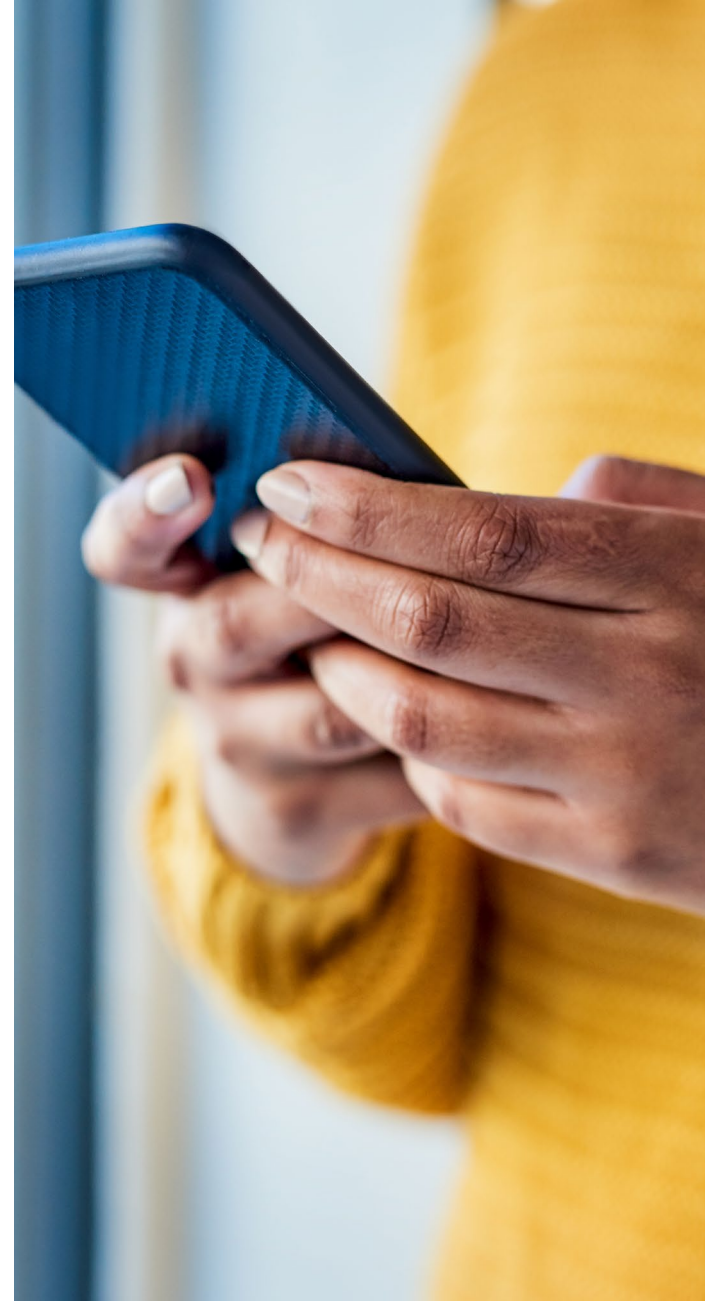
Reproductive coercion

- When someone tries to control your reproductive health.
- It includes:
 - tampering with or not allowing you to use contraception
 - forcing you to continue a pregnancy
 - forcing you to have an abortion.
- Reproductive coercion is **not okay**.



Who can you talk to?

- **1800 RESPECT** (1800 737 732) is the national sexual assault and domestic family violence counselling service.
- You can call the service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- The counsellors can listen to your story and provide support that is right for you.



More information and resources on sexual health



- Jean Hailes for Women's Health
jeanhailes.org.au/health-a-z
- MSI Australia (formerly Marie Stopes)
mariestopes.org.au
- Family Planning Alliance Australia
familyplanningallianceaustralia.org.au
- Let Them Know
letthemknow.org.au



Thank you

Go to jeanhailes.org.au/subscribe for updates on the latest in women's health



For further information contact

Jean Hailes for Women's Health
PO Box 24098
Melbourne VIC 3001

Phone 03 9453 8999

Email education@jeanhailes.org.au

Website jeanhailes.org.au

Disclaimer. This information does not replace medical advice. If a person is worried about their health, they should talk to their doctor or healthcare team.

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