

CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexual Assault and STDs

Information on HIV/AIDS and other
Sexually Transmitted Diseases

CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (formerly CONNSACS) is a statewide association of individual sexual assault crisis programs working to end sexual violence through victim assistance, community education and public policy advocacy.

Statewide 24-Hour Toll Free Hotline

1.888.999.5545

1.888.568.8332 (En Espanol)

<http://www.endsexualviolencect.org>

The Risk of Contracting Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) as a Result of Sexual Assault

The likelihood of contracting an STD as a result of sexual assault depends upon a number of factors which may include type of sexual contact that occurred (oral, rectal, vaginal, or penile contact), the number of perpetrators and whether or not the perpetrator had an STD at the time of the assault.

STDs that can be contracted during sexual contact include but are not limited to: hepatitis B, gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes, chlamydia, HPV or genital warts, and vaginitis, and HIV. Immediate and effective treatment options are available for most STDs, although some are not curable.

STD Testing and Treatment

Even if you do not have any symptoms of an infection, or your assault took place many months ago, you should still be tested for STDs after a sexual assault. Common symptoms include itching, bumps, vaginal discharge or penile fluid, genital pain or abdominal pain in females.

Unfortunately, it is also possible and common to have STDs and not experience any physical symptoms. If left untreated, some STDs can cause serious medical problems. STD testing and counseling are available at several sites throughout the state.

Costs for testing vary and some sites offer a sliding scale depending on what you can afford. *YOU WILL NOT BE REFUSED TESTING EVEN IF YOU CANNOT PAY.*

Victims may either choose to reduce the risk of contracting certain STDs by taking medication immediately following an assault as a preventive measure, or may wait to get tested to see if an STD was contracted before taking medication. Whichever option you choose, you should be re-examined and re-tested within a specific time period to be certain that you do not have an STD.

If the assault occurred recently, testing is recommended **two weeks** after the assault and again **three months later**. However, if symptoms appear at any time after the assault, it is important to see a doctor immediately for testing and treatment. The treatment for many STDs is a long-acting antibiotic. The amount of medicine and the length of time you take it depends on the type of STD.

If you test positive and you are sexually active you should encourage your sex partner(s) to be treated and abstain from having sex until the infection has cleared and your partner(s) have been examined and treated.

With the exception of hepatitis B and HPV, there are no vaccinations that will prevent you from getting re-infected with the same STD or contracting another STD. Every STD should be treated to prevent further complications.

List of STD Public Clinics

<http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3136&q=476726&pp=12&n=1>

As hours and clinic locations are subject to change, please contact each facility to confirm hours of service or set appointments when necessary.

Bridgeport

- *Bridgeport Health Department*

752 East Main Street

(203) 576-7468

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep A & B and HPV Vaccine

Danbury

- *Danbury Community Health Center*

70 Main Street

(203) 791-5050

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV

Fairfield

- *Fairfield Health Department*

Private Practice Referral

(203) 256-3020 or (203) 256-3150

Appt/Cost: By appointment.

Services: All STD

Greenwich

- *Greenwich Health Department*

101 Field Point Road

3rd Floor of Town Hall

(203) 622-6496

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV

Hartford

- Burgdorf Health Center

Hartford STD Clinic (Disease Prevention and Health Promotion)

131 Coventry Street, 1st Floor

(860) 543-882

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep A & B and HPV Vaccine / Hep C Screening

- Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective

1841 Broad Street

(860) 278-4163

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep A & B Vaccine / Hep C Screening

Manchester

- Planned Parenthood of CT

419 West Middle Turnpike

(860) 643-1607

Days/Hrs: Call to verify hours.

Appt/Cost: By appointment. Sliding fee.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep B Vaccine

Meriden

- Health Stop – Planned Parenthood of CT

26 Women's Way

(203) 238-0542

Days/Hrs: Call to verify hours.

Appt/Cost: By appointment. Sliding fee.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep B vaccine

New Britain

- *New Britain Health Department*

88 Prospect Street

(860) 826-3464

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep A & B and HPV Vaccine / Hep C Screening

New Haven

- *New Haven Health Department*

54 Meadow Street

(203) 946-8181

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep A & B and HPV Vaccine

New London

- *Community Health Center*

Shaw's Cove One

(860) 447-8304

Appt/Cost: By appointment. Sliding fee.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep B vaccine

Norwalk

- *Norwalk Health Department*

137 East Avenue

(203) 854-7976

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep A & B and HPV Vaccine

Norwich

- *William Backus Hospital STD Clinic*

107 Lafayette Street

(860) 823-6344

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep A & B and HPV Vaccine / Hep C
Screening

Stamford

- *Stamford Health Department*

141 Franklin Street

1st floor

(203) 977-4399 or (203) 977-5933

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep A & B and HPV Vaccine

Waterbury

- *Waterbury Health Department*

1 Jefferson Square

(203) 574-6880

Appt/Cost: No appointment necessary.

Services: All STD / HIV / Hep A & B and HPV Vaccine

West Haven

- *West Haven Health Department*

355 Main Street

(203) 932-4000 or (203) 937-3660

Days/Hrs: Call to verify hours.

Appt/Cost: By appointment.

Services: All STD

Westport/Weston

- *Westport Weston Health District*

180 Bayberry Lane

(203) 277-9571 x231

Days/Hrs: Call to verify hours.

Appt/Cost: By appointment.

Services: STDs (syphilis, GC, CT) / HIV / Hep C Screening

Willimantic

- *Planned Parenthood of Connecticut*

1548 West Main Street

(860) 423-8426

Days/Hrs: Call to verify hours.

Appt/Cost: By appointment.

Services: All STD / HIV

HIV/AIDS

How is HIV Spread?

HIV is not spread by casual contact. You cannot contract HIV through the air or saliva, or by touching objects and surfaces touched by people who are positive. HIV is spread from one HIV positive person to an HIV negative person by: sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal, and oral); from an infected mother to her baby (before birth, during birth, or through breast feeding); or by the blood of an infected person getting into the bloodstream of another person.

These blood-to-blood contacts happen most often when people

share hypodermic needles. It is possible to contract HIV from a sexual assault if an offender has HIV and there was direct contact orally, anally, vaginally, or through an open sore with semen (cum), pre-ejaculation fluid or blood of the offender.

The Risk of Contracting HIV as a Result of a Sexual Assault

The probability of contracting HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) through sexual assault is very low. For a victim to be at risk, the offender has to be HIV positive. Even if the offender is HIV positive, transmission of the virus may not have occurred.

However, for your own peace of mind, medical care providers recommend that you be tested for HIV. In the unlikely event of transmission of HIV, the virus may not be detected in a blood test for several months, therefore, having a re-test is very important. An HIV tester can talk with you about when and where to be re-tested and about special precautions you should take to protect your sexual partners.

HIV Prophylaxis

Immediately following a sexual assault, you may want to discuss the use of HIV prophylaxis treatment to prevent contracting HIV with emergency staff or a sexual assault crisis counselor. They can discuss the benefits and side effects of the treatment.

This is the same treatment that is given to health care providers after exposure to HIV positive blood. The treatment may not be recommended if too much time has passed since the assault. Therefore it is important to see a provider within 72 hours after a sexual assault.

HIV Testing Options

Because you may be in crisis, you may want to wait a few days after a sexual assault to have an HIV test. An HIV test is not part of a sexual assault examination. You do not need to have an HIV test at the hospital. A test given immediately after the assault will only tell you if you had contracted HIV prior to the assault, so you will need to be tested again in three months.

Waiting to take this test will give you a chance to think about all of your testing options and give you time to think about the best decision for you.

Where can I get free HIV testing?

HIV testing is available at sites throughout the state. For the location and phone number of a facility close to you, go to <http://hivtest.cdc.gov/>

List of HIV Testing Sites:

New Haven

- AIDS Project New Haven, New Haven, CT (203-624-0947)
- Liberty Community Services, New Haven, CT (203-495-7600)

Danbury

- AIDS Project Greater Danbury, Danbury, CT (203-778-2437)

Hartford

- Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective, Hartford, CT (860-278-4163)
- AIDS Connecticut, Hartford, CT (860-547-1771)
- Hartford Health Department, (860-543-8860)

- Latino Community Services, Hartford, CT (860-296-6400)

New Britain

- Human Resources Agency, New Britain, CT (860-826-4482)

Bridgeport

- GBAPP, (203-384-3629)

Stamford

- Stamford Health Department, (203-977-4387)

Windham

- Perception Programs, (860-450-7128)

Waterbury

- Waterbury Health Department (203-574-6780)

Torrington

- Waterbury Health Department, satellite site (203-574-6780)

Can I Have the Offender Tested for HIV?

If the offender has been charged with a sexual assault crime, you can ask the court to order the offender be tested for HIV. Forms for making the request are available through the court clerk's office.

As of October 1, 2004, the law allows you to choose a health care provider or DPH funded HIV testing site to receive the offender's test results and disclose them to you.

Although the risk of transmission of HIV is low in sexual assault cases, receiving the results of the offender's test can be stressful.

Meeting a health care professional and/or HIV counselor to receive and discuss the results can be helpful. The best source of information about whether or not you have contracted HIV is for you to be tested yourself.

Who can I talk to about being tested?

If the sexual assault occurred recently or even some time ago, you may want to talk to a knowledgeable person for advice. You can discuss your situation and options confidentially with a trained sexual assault counselor/advocate or HIV counselor.

A sexual assault counselor/advocate can help provide support, counseling and information about sexual violence, whether or not you choose to report the assault to the police. A sexual assault counselor/advocate can help you think through what you want to do, listen, give you information or refer you to the nearest HIV counseling and testing site. All of these services are free and confidential.

To reach a sexual assault crisis counselor near you, call the toll free statewide sexual assault crisis hotline at 1.888.999.5545 (In English), or 1.888.568.8332 (En Espanol).

An HIV tester can provide support and counseling, check your level of risk, and make a recommendation regarding testing.

An HIV tester can tell you how to protect yourself and any sex partner(s). An HIV tester can also refer you to other resources, as needed. Anything that you tell the tester, either on the phone or in person, is confidential.

The Risk of Hepatitis B (HBV) Transmission

Like HIV, hepatitis B (HBV) is caused by a virus. While HBV is spread in the same ways as HIV, it can also be spread through

saliva. It is however much easier to contract than HIV. HBV is not spread by casual contact or from objects and surfaces.

Some people may only get a mild sickness, while others may become very sick and die. Many people do not have symptoms. If you are at high risk for HIV you may also be at high risk for HBV as well.

Preventing HBV

HBV can be prevented by the completion of three dose hepatitis B vaccination series. It is important to receive all three shots. The recommended schedule is 0-1-6 months. Please consult your health care provider with questions about this vaccine and/or the schedule of doses. It is important to discuss HBV with a health care provider if you have not had the vaccine before the assault occurred.

Testing Options for HBV

Regardless of whether the sexual assault occurred recently or in the past, you should talk to a knowledgeable health care provider about counseling and testing options. Costs are based on a sliding scale depending on what you can afford. *YOU WILL NOT BE REFUSED TESTING EVEN IF YOU CANNOT PAY.*

CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The Center for Family Justice (*Bridgeport*)

- *Bridgeport*

Office: 203-334-6154 Hotline: 203-333-2233

YWCA of New Britain (*Hartford/New Britain*)

- *Hartford*

Office: 860-225-4681 Hotline: 860-547-1022

- *New Britain*

Office: 860-225-4681 Hotline: 860-223-1787

Women and Families Center (*Meriden/Middletown/New Haven*)

- *Meriden*

Office: 203-235-9297 Hotline: 203-235-4444

- *New Haven*

Office: 203-389-5010 Hotline: 203-235-4444

- *Middletown*

Office: 860-344-1474 Hotline: 203-235-4444

Sexual Assault Crisis Center of Eastern CT (*Willimantic/New London*)

- *Willimantic*

Office: 860-456-3595 Hotline: 860-456-2789

- *New London*

Office: 860-442-0604 Hotline: 860-437-7766

Women's Center of Greater Danbury Sexual Assault Crisis Services

- *Danbury*

Office: 203-731-5200 Hotline: 203-731-5204

Rape Crisis Center of Milford

- *Milford*

Office: 203-874-8712 Hotline: 203-878-1212

The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling and Education

- *Stamford*

Office: 203-348-9346 Hotline: 203-329-2929

Susan B. Anthony Project

- *Torrington*

Office: 860-489-3798 Hotline: 860-482-7133

Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury

- *Waterbury*

Office: 203-575-0388 Hotline: 203-753-3613

Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence

- *Statewide Office*

Office: 860-282-9881

- *Statewide 24-Hour Toll Free Hotlines*

1-888-999-5545 (Spanish/Espanol) 1-888-568-8332



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Raul Pino, MD, MPH, *Commissioner*
www.ct.gov/dph

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