

STUDYING STI/HIV

Lesson 1

8
GRADE

LEARNER OUTCOME¹ W-8.13:

Describe symptoms, effects, treatments, prevention for common sexually transmitted diseases; i.e., chlamydia, HPV, herpes, gonorrhea, hepatitis B, C, HIV.



MATERIALS:

1. HANDOUT: STI Chart
2. HANDOUT: STI Fact Sheet
3. ANSWER KEY: STI Chart
4. HANDOUT: Health Services Detective



INTRODUCTION:

Learning about STIs helps students to be able to take care of their own bodies, thereby preventing possible health and infertility problems associated with having an STI or allowing an STI to go untreated. This lesson helps students define and learn about STIs/HIV, as well as describe symptoms, effects, treatments, and prevention for common sexually transmitted infections.



The term STD (Sexually Transmitted Disease) is often replaced by the term STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection). The two terms are interchangeable, however, these resources use the term STI as it is the most up-to-date term.



APPROACHES:

A. Ground Rules

Ensure ground rules are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can promote a successful lesson.

(5 - 15 min)

B. Defining STI/HIV

These discussion questions aim to help students define STI/HIV and provide a rationale for learning about STI/HIV through class

(10 - 15 min)

discussion.

- With the class, discuss answers to the following questions. Discussion notes are provided.

1. Why is it important to learn about STIs/HIV?

- It helps one be able to take care of one's own body
- Untreated STIs can jeopardize a person's health and future ability to have children.
- It helps a person to discuss STIs with a boy or girlfriend.
- It helps us recognize myths like "It's easy to tell if a person has a STI/HIV because he/she will look sick" that could prevent a person from using effective prevention methods or seeking needed treatments.

2. When you hear the words STI or HIV, what do you think?

- Encourage students to share feelings and reactions.
- Common student responses may be that these words are "disgusting," or that it makes them think about death.
- Identify common themes throughout the discussion.

3. What is the definition for STI, or sexually transmitted infection?

- STIs are infections spread primarily by close sexual contact and sexual intercourse.

4. What are some STI you have heard of?

- List student suggestions on the board.

5. STI can be viral, or bacterial/parasitic. What do those words mean?

- **Viral:** If a virus causes a disease, it is possible for it to remain "asymptomatic" for periods of time (meaning there are no symptoms). It is possible to have the virus and not know it, and it is possible to pass it to another person without either person knowing it. Viral STIs can be treated with medications, but not cured. A person with a viral STI will have that virus for life. STI that are viral include genital warts (HPV), HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and genital herpes.
- **Bacterial/Parasitic:** If bacteria or a parasite causes a disease, it needs to be treated with antibiotic or antimicrobial medication. STIs that are bacterial/parasitic include gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, pubic lice, scabies and vaginitis.

6. How do HIV&AIDS and Hepatitis B and C differ from other STI?

- Because they are blood borne diseases, they can be spread by close sexual contact and sexual intercourse as well as other means such as blood transfusions, sharing needles, or

body piercing or tattooing equipment.

7. If you want to find out about STIs, what sources can provide accurate information?

- Doctor or public health clinics (such as the Sexual and Reproductive Health Clinic or STI Clinic)
- Teachers, counsellors, or school nurse
- Internet – see Links for Students
- Fact Sheets from a reliable source (Health Region)

C. Studying STIs

(30 – 35 min)

Students may describe symptoms, effects, treatments, and prevention's for common STIs.

1. Distribute the handout: STI Chart.
2. Divide the class into small groups. Assign each group a specific STI by giving each group a different STI Fact Sheet.
3. Ask each group to complete the appropriate section in the STI Chart using the information on the STI Fact Sheet.
4. Have groups share their findings with other groups, while students fill in all sections of the chart. This can be accomplished by asking groups to present findings to the entire class, or using a jigsaw approach (see Using Small Groups).
5. Debrief this activity using the following questions and the answer key for the STI Chart:
 - What are some symptoms of STIs?
 - How would you know if you had an STI?
 - Who would tell you if you had an STI?
 - What does a person with an STI look like?
 - Stress that anyone can get an STI. You can't tell by looking at someone if they have an STI.
 - What are the best ways to prevent STIs?
 - Abstinence
 - Limiting number of sexual partners
 - Use condoms correctly
 - Communication with partner
 - Not having sex if you see a sore, etc.
 - Regular STI testing (annually or as recommended by a doctor)

D. Health Services Detective

(5 min today, 30 min at home, 5 min next class)

This activity encourages students to identify community-based resources where they could go to get testing and information about

STI/HIV. Please see *Community Resources*.

1. Distribute the handout: Health Services Detective. Review it with students.
2. Invite students to complete this assignment at home with a parent or guardian.
3. Be sure to debrief this activity next class.



Schools with high risk students who may be more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour need to emphasize the importance of community support networks. You may want to consider turning this activity into a field trip during which you visit agencies in your community.



QUESTION BOX:

(10 min)

If time permits, address student questions.



TAKE IT HOME:

Students complete the handout Health Services Detective.



Keep in mind that all students do not live in a “traditional” family nor do they have equal opportunities for open discussion within their “family.” Although it is best for students to complete this assignment with a supportive parent or guardian, it may not be possible. Be sensitive to the needs of your students.



SELF REFLECTION:

- During the lesson, were:
- Ground rules being followed?
 - Good practices established regarding discussion?
 - Skill building activities handled appropriately by the students?

What will you change for future classes with this group?

What will you change for future use of this lesson?



STUDENT ASSESSMENT:

During the lesson, did students:

- Knowledge:**
- Define STI?
 - Identify symptoms, effects, treatments and prevention for common STI?
 - Identify community-based resources where information and testing for STI is available?
- Attitudes:**
- Accept the need to prevent STI/HIV?

1

Alberta Learning. (2002). Kindergarten to grade 9 health and life skills: Guide to implementation. Retrieved July, 2007, from http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/K_12/curriculum/bysubject/healthpls/healthgi.asp.