

STBBI Stigma Case Studies

Su and Krin are queer and have been seeing each other for a few months. They have a wonderful relationship and have started to become physically intimate. Su occasionally gets herpes and is not sure how and when to tell Krin.

1. When should Su tell Krin and why?
2. Why might Su feel nervous about telling Krin?
3. What, if anything, could Krin and Su do to reduce the risk of transmission?

Kira and Nial identify as cisgender and straight. They have been using condoms most of the time since they started having sex. Nial suggested Kira go on the oral contraceptive pill so they could stop using condoms altogether. Nial has had a few sexual partners in the past but he doesn't want Kira to know. When she asks if he'll come with her to get tested, he gets upset and says she doesn't trust him.

1. Is it okay to ask a partner to get tested?
2. If Nial refuses to get tested, what are Kira's options?

Nina was sexually involved with someone who had HPV (genital warts). Nina wants to start having sex with Rav but worries that if she brings up her former partner's HPV, Rav won't want to have sex with her and will think she's "dirty" and/or "slutty."

1. What are Nina's options?
2. What is stopping Nina from talking with Rav?
3. What would you tell Nina to boost her confidence?

Nan and Mel have sex together but they aren't romantically involved. Nan also has sex with two other people. Nan uses protection with one of them.

1. What do Nan and Mel need to discuss?
2. What might be stopping either of them from talking?
3. What are some ways to get this conversation going?

Trev and Bek are in a long term relationship and are talking about whether they want to explore anal sex with each other. Trev's previous partner had syphilis but Trev never got tested or told Bek about it. This is the first time that Bek has been in a relationship with another cisgender guy. Trev feels really guilty bringing it up now since they've been sexually involved in other ways but Bek is also really worried about possible transmission during anal sex.

1. Why did Trev not talk to Bek about the syphilis before?
2. What are Trev's options and next steps moving forward?

Mila is a cisgender bisexual woman who went to the doctor to get a prescription for oral contraceptive pills. She's been having unprotected sex with a new-ish monogamous partner (who is a straight cisgender guy) and decided while at the doctor's to get tested for STBBIs. The test results came back and she was diagnosed with chlamydia. She got treated but didn't tell her new partner, even though the doctor told her that any sexual partners would need to be notified and treated. Mila and her partner don't use condoms. *Note: in the case of a reportable STBBI (like chlamydia) a local public health nurse will often work with you to identify sexual partners that might have been exposed and help them access testing and treatment options.*

1. What is likely to happen?
2. Why do you think Mila didn't want to tell her partner?
3. How do you feel about the fact that Mila didn't disclose her chlamydia?

Bryn and Mira have just started dating. They have no problem talking to each other about most things. They both identify as trans and have never been sexually involved with anyone else. Both of them are shy to talk about safer sex and wonder if it's even necessary since neither of them have been sexually active.

1. Do they need to talk about safer sex? Why?
2. When they have an easy time talking generally, why are both of them shy to talk to each other about safer sex?

Dane went away for the summer with some buddies. They gave each other tattoos with homemade instruments they passed around. When he got back from his summer trip, Dane went to see his girlfriend Jes right away and showed her the tattoos. Jes liked the tattoos and was really happy to see him. Before he'd left, Dane and Jes had planned that they would have sex (penis-vagina intercourse) for the first time as soon as he was back. Jes went on the pill but still wanted to use condoms. Dane got angry and said she was accusing him of having sex with someone else on his trip. Jes relented and had unprotected sex with him. Afterward, she felt really worried and mad at Dane and herself.

1. Was Dane putting Jes at risk for STBBIs?
2. Why did Jes "relent" and have unprotected sex?
3. Is there anything Jes can do now?