

Introduction to cultural anthropology, unit 3, question #2

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Question #2-What are five sexually transmitted diseases? Describe the symptoms and a preventive method for each. Sex is a natural part of the human experience. In addition to a vital aspect of human relationships, sex is the reason for the rapid growth and variation of the human population. Sex is also responsible for sexually transmitted diseases(STD). Five of the most common STD's are chlamydia, gonorrhea, genital herpes, syphilis, and AIDS. According to Karen Duffy and Eastwood Atwater, authors of the book entitled *Psychology for Living*, chlamydia is a " bacterium that is spread by sexual contact and affects both males and females" (Duffy and Atwater, 2008). For men, the most common symptoms of chlamydia is discharge from the penis and burning during urination(Duffy and Atwater, 2008). For women, there are no symptoms of the disease, so often times women are not aware that they have chlamydia. The easiest way to prevent against chlamydia is to use contraceptives such as condoms, which is the most effective way of preventing STDs. The most common treatment for chlamydia is antibiotics like tetracycline(Duffy and Atwater, 2008).

Gonorrhea is an STD that is identified as " a bacterial infection" (Duffy and Atwater, 2008). The most common symptoms for men with gonorrhea is burning during urination and smelly, cloudy discharge from their penis(Duffy and Atwater, 2008). For women with this STD, discharge and burning sensations might also occur, but symptoms are much harder to detect.

Condoms are deemed to be the most effective way to prevent against the contraction of gonorrhea; however it is not 100 percent effective. The most common way to treat gonorrhea is through an antibiotic such as penicillin(Duffy and Atwater, 2008).

Unlike chlamydia and gonorrhea, genital herpes is a viral infection (Duffy and Atwater, 2008). The most common symptom for both men and women is the appearance of red bumps on the genital area, which will turn into rupturing blisters as it progresses (Duffy and Atwater, 2008). Like the other STD's, condoms are the most effective preventative method. Unlike the other STD's however, genital herpes is not curable (Duffy and Atwater, 2008).

Syphilis is a "spiral shaped bacterium" which is spread through sexual contact, but can be contracted other ways (Duffy and Atwater, 2008). One of the main symptoms of this disease is bumps on the penis for men and inside the vagina for women" (Duffy and Atwater, 2008). In the sense of sexual contact, condoms are still the best preventative method, but if detected early enough, syphilis is easy to treat.

Lastly, AIDS is an autoimmune disease that develops from HIV, which is a virus often contracted through sexual contact (Duffy and Atwater, 2008).

Some of the possible symptoms are weight loss, fatigue, fevers, and swollen lymph nodes (Duffy and Atwater, 2008). Although, there is no cure, latex condoms are thought to be the most effective preventative method against the disease.

STD's are widespread and can be very dangerous. As the population grows, so too does the possibility for the spread of STD's. Although condoms are essential in preventing STD's, perhaps knowledge and sex education are even more important in the fight against them.

References

Duffy, K. G., & Atwater, E. (2008). *Psychology for living* (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Custom Pub.