

The terms below are defined in the context of their use within this health guide. For complete definitions, consult a reputable medical dictionary.

## Definition of Terms

- Acute infection** . . . . . A short-term illness caused by a germ.
- AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome)** . . . . . The late stage of HIV infection. When you have AIDS, your immune system is very weak.
- Alcohol hand rub, or alcohol hand sanitizer** . . . . . A liquid or gel used to clean hands. It contains alcohol to kill germs.
- Amniotic fluid** . . . . . Fluid around an unborn baby in the uterus. Amniotic fluid can be used to test for infections during pregnancy.
- Antibiotics** . . . . . A type of medicine used to treat bacterial infections. Antibiotics do not work on viral infections.
- Antiviral drugs** . . . . . A type of medicine used to treat viral infections such as influenza (flu) and HIV.
- Bacteria** . . . . . A type of germ that may cause infection. Not all bacteria are harmful or cause infection. Most bacterial infections are treated with antibiotics.

<b>Bacterial vaginosis (BV)</b> . . . . .	A common vaginal infection in women that occurs when the balance of normal bacteria in the vagina is upset. It is the most common vaginal infection in women of childbearing age. It is also common in pregnant women.
<b>Biopsy</b> . . . . .	The removal of a small piece of an organ or tissue to look for signs of disease or damage.
<b>Bladder</b> . . . . .	The organ in the urinary tract that stores urine.
<b>Cervix</b> . . . . .	The opening to the uterus (womb).
<b>Chronic infection</b> . . . . .	A long-term illness caused by a germ.
<b>Chlamydia</b> . . . . .	A common sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by bacteria. It can lead to unusual vaginal discharge and can be harmful during pregnancy. It may also cause problems getting pregnant.
<b>Cirrhosis</b> . . . . .	Scarring of the liver.
<b>Cold</b> . . . . .	An infection of the nose, sinuses, or throat caused by a virus.
<b>“Community” or “Herd” Immunity</b> . . . . .	Disease prevention that occurs when most people have been vaccinated against or have had an infection. This stops the spread of a contagious disease to protect even those not vaccinated to avoid large outbreaks of disease.
<b>Condom, female</b> . . . . .	A plastic barrier inserted into the vagina before intercourse to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and pregnancy.
<b>Condom, male</b> . . . . .	A latex, “lambskin”, or plastic barrier used to cover the penis during vaginal, anal, or oral sex to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and pregnancy.
<b>Contagious</b> . . . . .	The spread of germs from one person (or other living organism) to another.
<b>Dental dam</b> . . . . .	A square piece of latex (rubber) or silicone used as a barrier during oral sex to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
<b>Diaphragm</b> . . . . .	A type of birth control that is inserted into the vagina to cover the cervix. A diaphragm does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
<b>Douching</b> . . . . .	Cleaning or washing the inside of the vagina with water or a mixture of fluids. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that women do not douche.
<b>Fallopian tubes</b> . . . . .	The tubes that carry eggs from the ovaries to the uterus.
<b>Fungus (fungi)</b> . . . . .	A type of organism that may cause infection. Fungi can cause vaginal yeast infections and severe diseases like pneumonia in people with weak immune systems.
<b>Genital warts</b> . . . . .	Small growths on the skin in the genital areas that include the penis, vulva, urethra, vagina, cervix, and around and in the anus caused by human papillomavirus (HPV).

<b>Gonorrhea</b> . . . . .	A sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by bacteria. Also known as “the clap” or “the drips”. It can lead to unusual vaginal discharge and can be harmful during pregnancy.
<b>Hepatitis</b> . . . . .	A swollen (inflamed) liver that can be caused by viral infections, drugs, diseases, alcohol, and/or toxins.
<b>Herpes</b> . . . . .	A sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by two types of herpes simplex viruses.
<b>HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)</b> . . . . .	A virus that attacks and weakens the immune system.
<b>Human papillomavirus (HPV)</b> . . . . .	The most common sexually transmitted disease (STD) in the United States. There are over 40 types of HPV viruses that can infect genital, mouth, or throat areas. Some can lead to genital warts or increase the risk for cervical cancer.
<b>Immune system</b> . . . . .	Parts of the body that protect against germs and diseases.
<b>Immunity</b> . . . . .	The ability of your body to avoid an infection or disease.
<b>Influenza (flu)</b> . . . . .	A respiratory illness caused by a flu virus.
<b>Intrauterine device (IUD)</b> . . . . .	A type of birth control inserted into the uterus. An IUD does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
<b>Kidneys</b> . . . . .	Organs in the urinary tract that collect waste from blood to make urine.
<b>Listeriosis</b> . . . . .	An infection mainly caused by eating food contaminated with the bacterium <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> .
<b>Lymph nodes</b> . . . . .	Small organs within the immune system spread throughout the body that help fight infection.
<b>Ovaries</b> . . . . .	The organs that hold a woman's eggs.
<b>Ovule</b> . . . . .	A medicine tablet that is inserted into the vagina to treat infections.
<b>Parasite</b> . . . . .	An organism that can cause infection. Parasites may cause infections such as trichomoniasis and toxoplasmosis.
<b>Pasteurization</b> . . . . .	A heating process often used in milk and cheese production that kills bacteria and other germs.
<b>Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)</b> . . . . .	An infection of the female reproductive organs, including the uterus and fallopian tubes. Women with a sexually transmitted disease (STD) are at a higher risk for PID.
<b>Pneumonia</b> . . . . .	An infection of the lungs that can be caused by bacteria, virus, fungi, or parasites.
<b>Safer sex</b> . . . . .	The use of barriers such as condoms during vaginal, anal, or oral sex to prevent and control the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and other infections.

<b>Sexually transmitted disease (STD)</b>	Infection spread by vaginal, anal, or oral sex, and genital touching. STDs can be caused by bacteria, parasites, or viruses. Common STDs include chlamydia, HPV, and herpes.
<b>Sexually transmitted infection (STI)</b>	See sexually transmitted disease (STD).
<b>Syphilis</b>	A sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by bacteria that can produce sores on the genitals, vagina, anus, rectum, and even on the lips and in the mouth.
<b>Toxoplasmosis</b>	An infection caused by a small parasite. It is the leading cause of death from food-borne illness in the United States. It can be very harmful during pregnancy.
<b>Trichomoniasis</b>	A sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by a small parasite. It can lead to unusual vaginal discharge and can be harmful during pregnancy.
<b>Ureters</b>	Tubes of the urinary tract that move urine from the kidneys to the bladder.
<b>Urethra</b>	The tube within the urinary tract that carries urine from the bladder out of the body.
<b>Urinary tract</b>	The body system that makes, stores, and carries urine out of the body. Includes the kidneys, ureters, bladder, and urethra.
<b>Urinary tract infection (UTI)</b>	An infection that occurs when bacteria grow in the urinary tract.
<b>Uterus</b>	The womb; the part of the female reproductive system where babies grow and develop during pregnancy.
<b>Vaccine</b>	A medical preparation given to help the body produce immunity or to fight disease.
<b>Vaginal yeast infection</b>	An infection of the vagina and vaginal area caused by a type of fungus called yeast. A yeast infection is <u>not</u> a sexually transmitted disease (STD).
<b>Virus</b>	A type of germ that causes infections and disease. Influenza (flu), HIV, and herpes are caused by viruses. Antiviral drugs are used to treat viral infections.
<b>Yeast</b>	A type of fungus that can lead to infection in the vagina.