



SHARP News



New SHARPFact Factsheet: “How do I tell my partner...?”

A new SHARPFact fact sheet entitled “How do I tell my partner...?” is now available.

This SHARPFact explains why the sexual partners of people with a sexually transmitted infection should be informed of their potential exposure. It explains to the reader which partners should be notified, based on the contact tracing period for each infection type. It also covers what information their partners need to know.

This SHARPFact also helps the reader understand how contact tracing works. It briefly explains each of the four contact referral options described in the 1998 CDC *Partner Counseling and Referral Services Guidance*. Armed with this information, clients infected with an STD may be more comfortable with the referral process, and be more likely to select an appropriate and successful referral strategy for each of their partners. An excerpt from this SHARPFact:

How can my partners be given the information they need?

There are a few ways to go about this. You might choose a different approach for each partner, depending on your relationships and what you feel will work best for you and for them. Your health care professional will discuss each of these with you and help you formulate a plan.

Option 1, “Client referral”. You inform your partner that you have the disease and they may also have it. Use the name of the disease, and emphasize that it is very important they see a doctor promptly, even if they don’t think they are infected. When speaking with your partner, a caring attitude is helpful, while a blaming attitude is not. Keep in mind that your partner, even if infected, may not know it. Some people may have some sexually transmitted infections for long periods without having symptoms.

Option 2, “Provider Referral”. With your permission, a trained health care professional informs your partner that someone with the disease has named them as a contact. This information is ideally shared face-to-face. The health care worker never discloses your name, but says only that a person who cares enough about them gave their name to ensure they receive appropriate care. The health care worker then helps your partner access medical treatment and testing.

Option 3, “Dual Referral”. You inform your partner in the presence of the health care professional. This approach supports you and ensures your partner receives prompt and complete information and medical care.

Option 4, “Contract Referral”. This is really Options 1 and 2 combined. You agree to inform you partner and, if that partner does not call or visit the health care professional by a given date, then the health care professional informs your partner and arranges treatment and testing.

Download the entire SHARPFact sheet from the SHARP website at <http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/hp/sharp/shrpfact.htm>

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“Chart a Safe Course”

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