

**The STI Flipchart was developed by
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There are many natural things that are good for us. However, some of these things can make us sick if they carry germs. For example, it is natural to drink water, but water can make us sick with diarrhoea when it carries germs. Sex is also natural, and it is healthy for us to enjoy sex. But sex has made these men sick because their sexual partners were carrying germs. When germs are spread from one person to another through sex we call the disease a `sexually transmitted disease` or STD.



**STDs are what we used to commonly call “VD”
(venereal diseases).**

NAMES OF STDs

Chlamydia

Gonorrhoea

Genital Ulcers

Syphilis

Candida

Herpes

Genital Warts

Pubic Lice

What attitudes do people in your community have towards their STDs?

- Some people are afraid that if they are honest about their STD it might destroy the relationship they have with their partner.
- Some people see STDs as “vuilsiekte” (dirty sickness). They may feel guilty and “dirty” and avoid going for treatment because they are ashamed.
- Some just see STDs as a minor problem and do not take them seriously.
- Some men see an STD as proof that they are real men.

HOW ARE STDs CAUSED?

If you have an STD like the ones we are going to see, it does not mean that you have been dirty.

- STDs are not caused by dirt. STDs are not caused by “dirty blood”
- STDs cannot be caused by the death of a previous sex partner.
- No traditional herbs or modern medicine can cause STDs.
- STDs cannot be caused by witchcraft.

Some people believe that if you have an STD, you can have sex with your partner, and give all your STD germs to your partner. Some people think this is a way to get rid of their STDs.

STDs are caused by germs. The more sexual partners you have, the greater the chance of getting the STDs.

HOW STDs ARE SPREAD

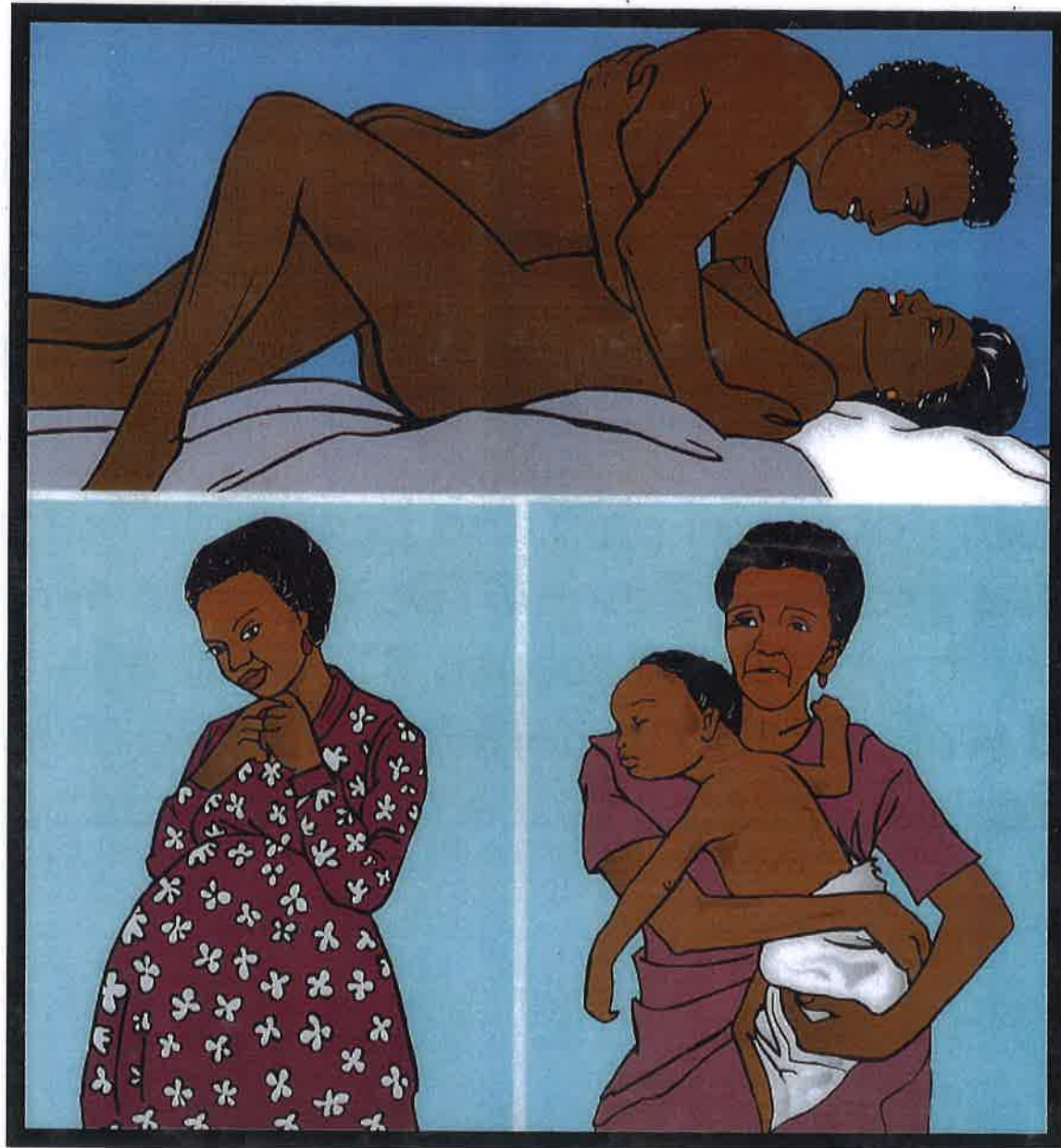
1. During sex:

- If one partner has a STD he/she can spread it to his/her sexual partner through the delicate skin in the sex organs
- STDs can be passed from a man to a woman, from a woman to a man and from one man to another man.

2. During pregnancy:

- If a pregnant woman has a STD she can pass it on to her baby during pregnancy or childbirth

In women, STDs are often found deep inside their vaginas or wombs. For this reason, women often show no signs or symptoms of STDs, and they do not get proper treatment.



STDs ARE SPREAD IN 2 WAYS

1. Through sexual contact with a person who already has a STD.
2. And if a mother has an STD, she can pass it on to her unborn child during pregnancy or during childbirth.

CAN YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE STD?

It is easy to understand that STD germs can enter the soft skin (mucous membrane) of our sex organs. But, if we already have one STD, with a sore or rash on our sex organs, it is then **even easier** for the new STD germs to enter through those sores and rashes.

We say that STDs are “traveling companions” – they love going everywhere together.

This means that if you have one STD already, it is much easier for you to catch another STD.

WHAT ABOUT STDS AND PREGNANCY?

A little germ which we cannot even see with our eyes can cause big problems.

Whatever germs are given to a woman during sex can be carried to the womb and be given to her unborn child during pregnancy or during childbirth. The baby may be stillborn (dead before birth), be born blind, with brain damage or other serious problems.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STDs

Men and women have:

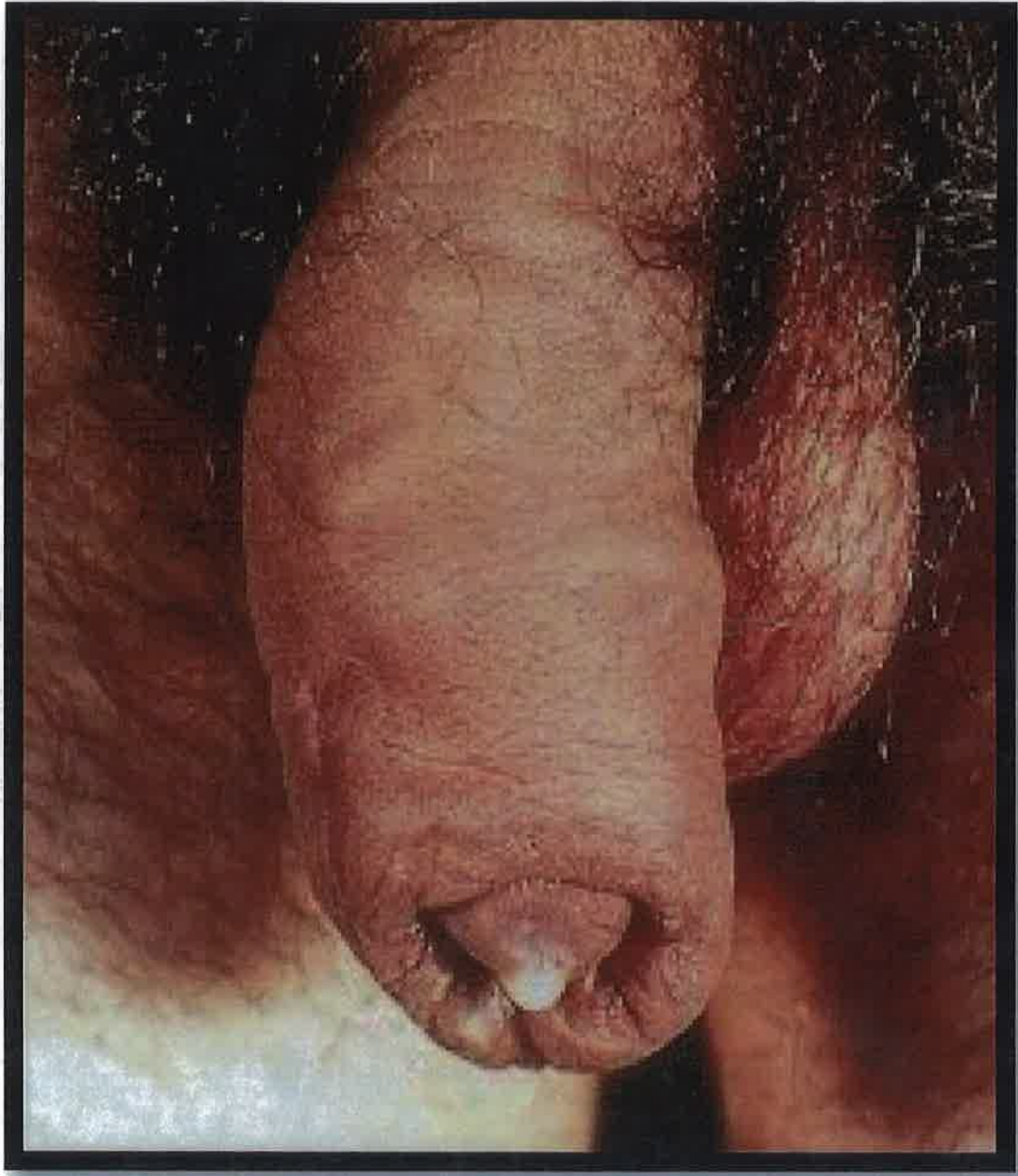
- Burning when they pass water (urinate)
- Unusual discharge form the penis or the vagina (the discharge can be white or yellow) It can also be smelly.
- Lumps (swollen glands) in the groin
- Sores on or around the sex organs
- Warts (little bumps on the sex organ)
- Itching around sex organs
- Rashes around the sex organs
- Pain in the lower abdomen (stomach area), especially in women
- Pain in the men's testicles
- Swollen testicles

GONORRHEA AND CHLAMYDIA

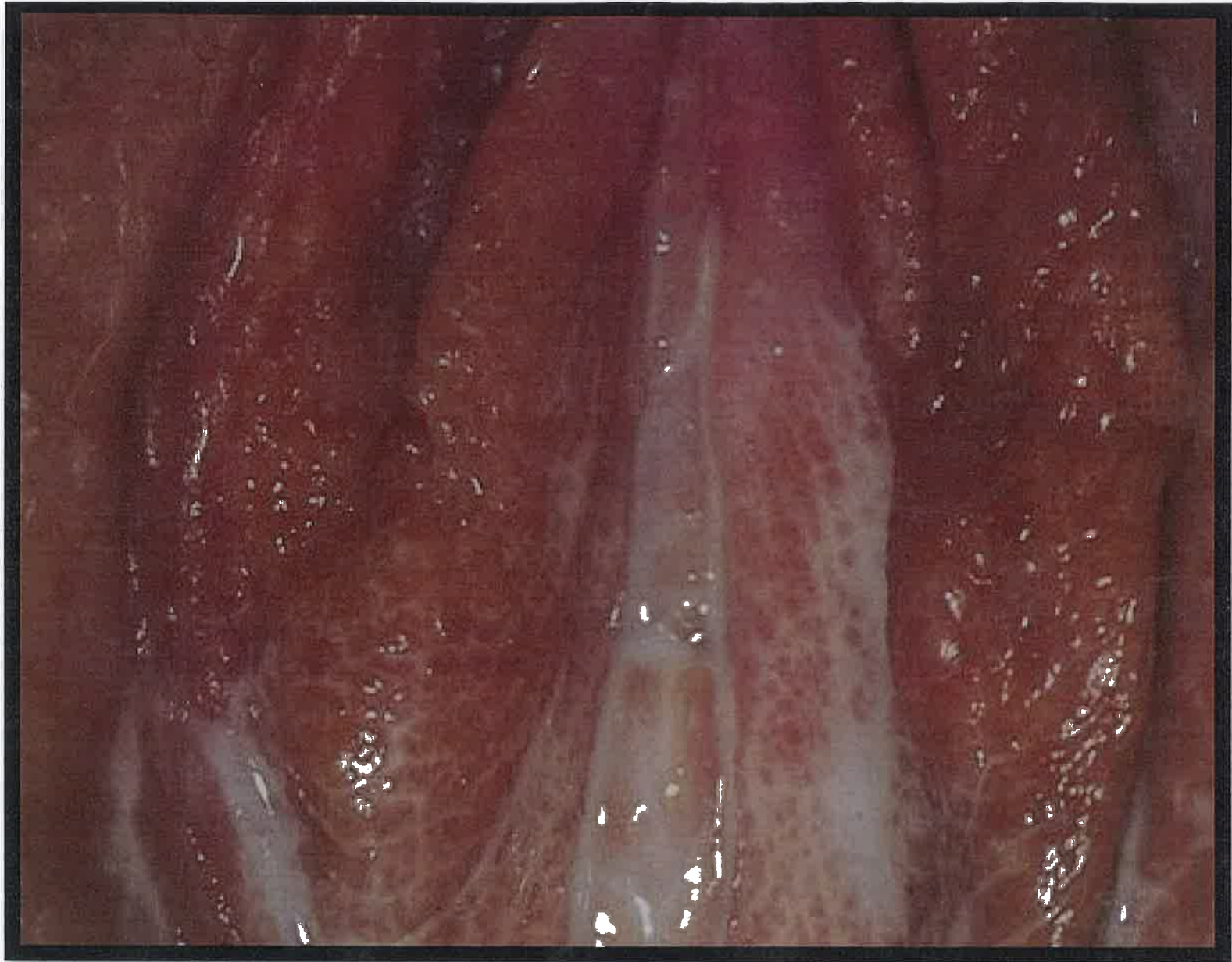
This is called a discharge: unusual fluids coming out from the penis or vagina. Here you can see drops of fluid coming from the penis. We are using pictures of men because it is easier to see in men. The discharge may be thick and yellowish or it may be white. The STD germ lives in that discharge. The discharge may also smell bad.



Gonorrhoea symptoms affecting the penis.



Gonorrhea symptoms affecting the penis.



Vaginal Gonorrhoea symptoms.

CHANCROID

This can happen to men and women. Sores that look like blisters may appear on or near the sex organs. The STD germs live in the fluid of these wet sores.



Chancroid

CANDIDIASIS

Men and women can get a rash on and around the sex organs, and inside the vagina. The rash may cause burning and itching. The skin can be very sensitive and raw. This is often associated with a white discharge that looks like cottage cheese. Women with HIV/AIDS may get more frequent episodes of vaginal candida as their immune system becomes weaker.



Candidiasis



Candidiasis

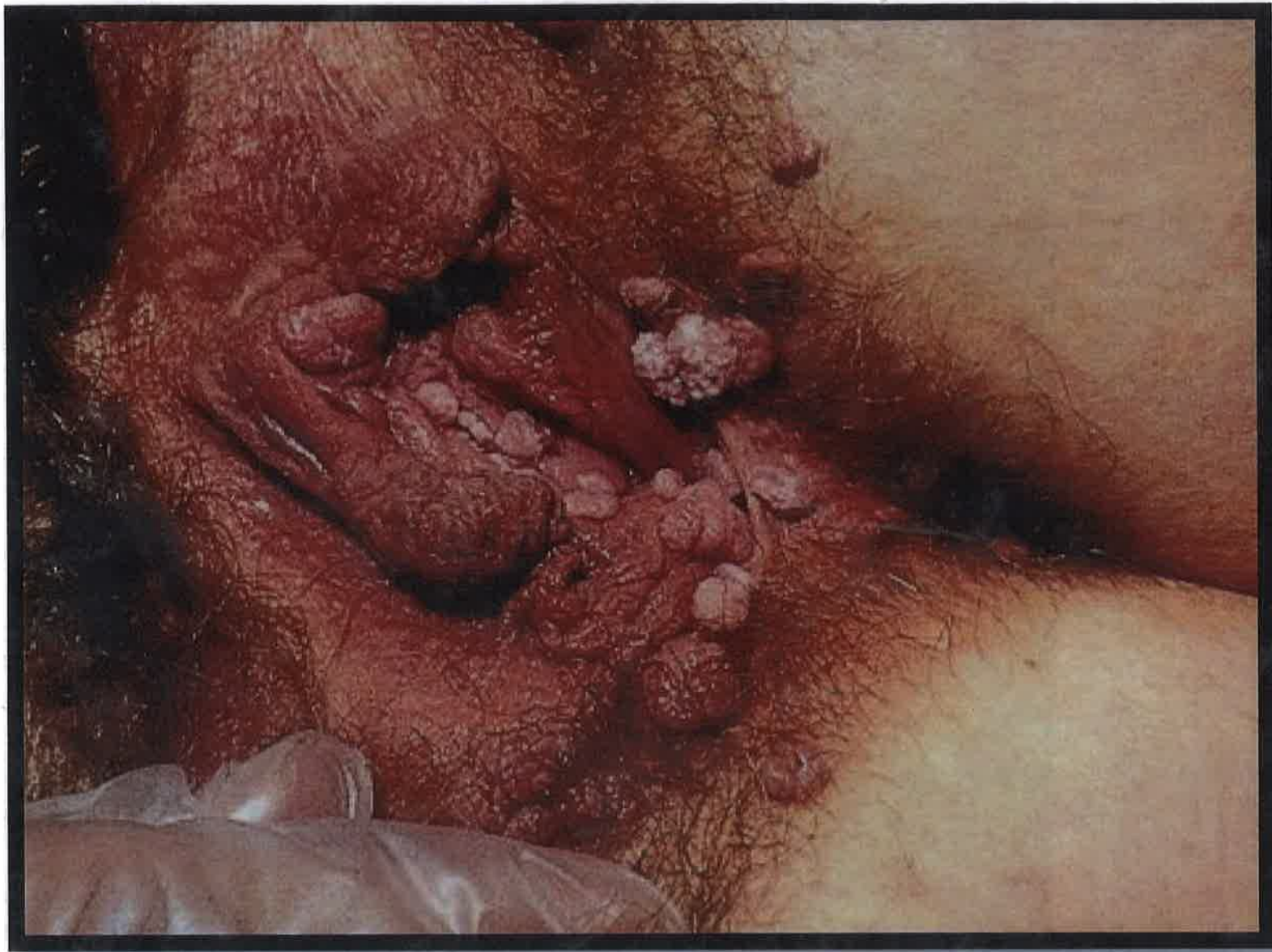
SWOLLEN GLANDS/LGV

Some STDs can cause the glands in the groin of a man or woman to swell.

GENITAL WARTS ("CAULIFLOWER")

Men and women can get warts on and around the sex organs. The warts can be little bumps or they can grow very big like this photograph shows. The little bumps may be inside or outside the vagina, on the penis, or towards the anus.

Even though the warts are "sealed", and there is no discharge or blood, they can spread by touching the wart to the sex organs of the partner.



Genital warts around the vagina.



Genital warts around the anus.



Genital warts on the penis.



Genital warts on the penis.

SECONDARY SYPHILIS

Syphilis first starts with a painless sore on the genital area of men and women.

Here is a picture of a man who had syphilis sores all over his back and arms. He did not go for treatment when he had syphilis on his penis, because the sore was not very painful. The sore went away and he thought the problem was gone. Syphilis is an STD that can spread throughout the whole body.



Secondary Syphilis

The picture is called secondary syphilis because it is the later stage of the disease. The man thinks it is something new. He does not realize it is caused by the same germ that caused the sore on his sex organs.

In this picture we can see how syphilis has spread through his body, and now, months after the sore has disappeared, the syphilis germ is causing a serious rash all over the back and arms. This rash is very infectious. You can get the syphilis germ just from touching it.

The rash will disappear without treatment, but the germs will still be there in the blood. It can lead to problems such as stroke and mental problems later.



Syphilis symptoms on the penis.



Syphilis symptoms on the penis.



Syphilis symptoms around the vagina.



Secondary syphilis. around the vagina and anus.

THE GOLDEN RULE

It is not important to remember the names of STDs. The golden rule is that: **“If you have anything unusual on your sex organs, you should go to the clinic for assessment and treatment without delay.”**

We also need to understand that not all problems on our sex organs are caused by STDs (e.g. heat rashes; thrush caused by taking antibiotics).

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN STDs ARE NOT TREATED?

Most STDs can be treated easily. But if you wait a long time before getting treatment your STD can cause serious problems. If left untreated STDs can lead to:

- Illnesses which destroy a man and woman's chance of having children (infertility).
- Genital cancer (especially cancer of the cervix in women).
- Complications in pregnancy that threaten the life of the mother and the baby.
- Death, especially of babies who suffer a very serious form of their mother's STD.
- Liver disease (hepatitis).

WOMEN AND STDs

1. People usually have sex in the dark and do not check their partners' sex organs! They cannot see when their partner has an STD.
2. Some STDs do not cause pain and people do not believe they have a serious problem. Some STDs show no symptoms at all (especially in women). Because STDs are often hidden in women, and women may experience no pain or irritation, they may go untreated and lead to the more serious problems we have discussed.

WOMEN AND STDs

3. In some languages STDs are called “women’s diseases”. Why is this? Do people think that only women get STDs? Do they think that women pass STDs onto men, but that men do not pass them onto women?

Most STDs in women are hidden deep inside the vagina or womb, and do not show obvious signs.

When a man gives an STD to a woman, the STD is often hidden deep inside the woman’s vagina or womb. She may not even feel or see any signs of a problem. Men sometimes think that they are the only ones with STDs, because the problem is more easily seen on men.