

Irish STIs from 1992 until 2002

Consistent with other Western European countries, the numbers and rates of bacterial and viral STIs in Ireland have been increasing since the mid-1990s.

The total number of STIs in Ireland Has increased more than 3 fold in ten years from 3,353 in 1992 to 10,471 in 2002.

During that time, notification of both non-specific **urethritis** and **ano-genital warts** doubled to 2,025 and 3,932 respectively. Cases of **gonorrhoea** rose to over four times their 1992 rate to 214 cases in 2002.

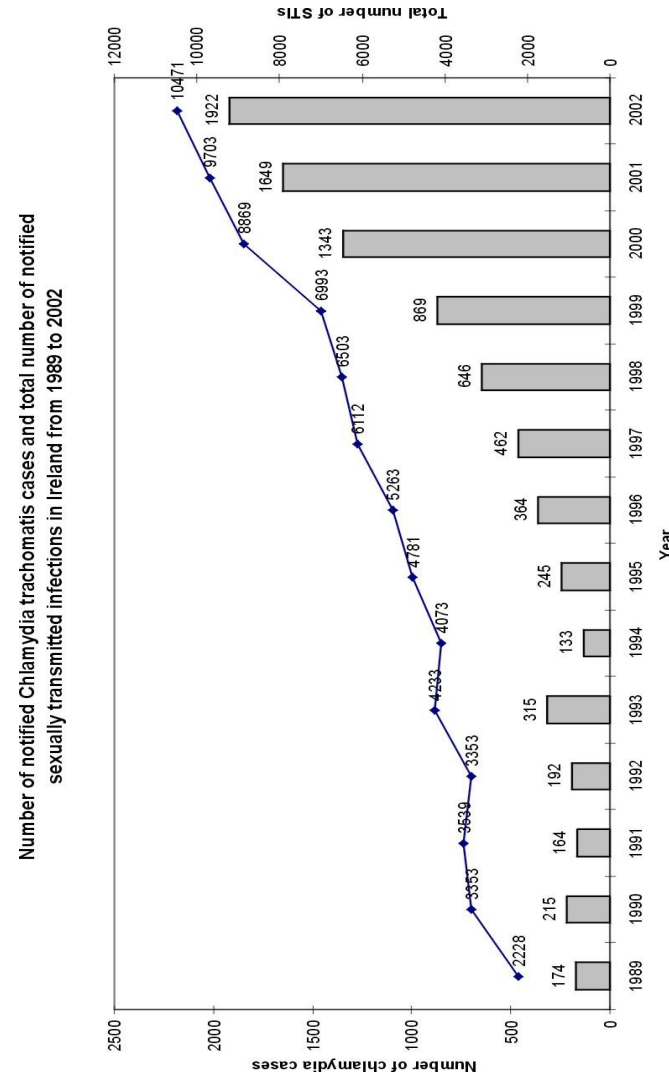
A fifteen-fold increase in syphilis cases was recorded between 1992 and 2002, when 303 cases were notified.

However, the greatest increase was seen in the number of **chlamydia infections**, which soared by more than **1000 per cent**.

The rising trends in STIs reflect the continued deterioration in Irish sexual health, particularly amongst **young heterosexuals**.

People need to be informed of the risks. **If you want to stay healthy avoid sex until you are married, and then only have sex with your spouse!** Anything less will put your sexual health at risk. Condoms appear to offer little, if any protection.

"Safe Sex" is a deadly game.
Saved sex until marriage is a Healthy Choice



Further Information is available from www.ndsc.ie
www.abstinence.net

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Irish Statistics 2004



Condoms have not had any positive impact in reducing the rising incidence of STIs in Ireland or the rest of the western world. In fact, it could be convincingly argued that condoms are at least partly responsible for promoting an increase in the number of STIs we see today.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STI'S) IN IRELAND 2004

Chlamydia is swiftly becoming the most commonly diagnosed sexually transmitted infection (STI) in Ireland.

In a ten-year period between 1992 and 2002, there was an alarming ten-fold rise in notified cases of chlamydia trachomatis (See Graph on reverse of Leaflet).

This **increase, from 192 to 1,922 cases** is greater than that recorded for any other STI in that period.

Medical researchers named chlamydia from the *Greek word meaning 'cloak'*, precisely because it is **not usually accompanied by any symptoms**.

Only **one in four women** affected with the chlamydia bacterium has identifiable symptoms, as have only about **one in two men**. As chlamydia is asymptomatic in most cases, this 'silent' infection can prove devastating for women, who may not be aware of their treatable condition until it results in pelvic inflammatory disease, **ectopic pregnancy and infertility**.

Alarming Increase

The NDSC sub-committee on STI surveillance is examining the need for chlamydia screening in Ireland. The UK's Expert Advisory Group on Chlamydia trachomatis (1998) recommended **opportunistic screening of all sexually active women under 25 years**, and women who have had more than two sexual partners in the previous 12 months. This is **regardless of whether or not condoms were used** as condoms have not been proven to prevent the spread of this infection.

Latest figures from genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland reveal that genital chlamydia infection is now the most common STI, with a **total of 71,055 diagnoses in 2001 in the UK**.

This is the first time in 30 years that a bacterial STI has been the most commonly diagnosed STI.

The figures speak for themselves; there has been a substantial increase in chlamydia since the 1990s. Condoms have been available over the counter in Irish Pharmacies since 1985.

Condom Availability and STIs

In 1993 the sale of condoms were deregulated, so they are now widely available in most Irish pubs and restaurants and shops.

Despite this we have noticed an alarming increase in STIs in Ireland, coinciding with increased condom availability. If condoms were effective in reducing STIs we should have expected at least a halt in the increase, however the opposite has happened.

Increased condom use has probably led to an increase in the number of sexual partners and a consequent increase in STI's.

If you have had sex with more than one person (or if your partner has) you are at risk of contracting a STI which may have devastating effects on your future fertility. This is more likely if you are under 25, especially regarding Chlamydia which is most prevalent in this age group.

Remember people with chlamydia and other STI's look perfectly healthy and are usually not aware they are infected and may pass it on.