

ATTACHMENT 1

THE BIG 5 STDs AND INFECTIONS TESTED FOR WITH THE 3 VAGINAL SWABS

The swabs that were performed today will check for STDs and other bacteria and yeast that can cause vaginitis. They are the 'Big 5':

1. Chlamydia (STD)
2. Gonorrhea (STD)
3. Trichomonas (STD)
4. Bacterial Vaginosis (can be associated with sex)
5. Yeast (can occasionally be sexually transmitted)

It takes about 3-6 days to get the results back. We can let you know the results by email (if normal) or phone.

The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends STD's screening (testing) yearly in all sexually active women under the age of 25. STD's can be present for a long time before women have any symptoms. If they are caught early, the treatment can eradicate the STD's before they cause any harm, hence the regular testing.

The swabs can also be performed in women of any age if they have new sex partner or more than 2 sexual partners in the last year, women with a previous STD, or who have sexual contact with a person with an STD, and all pregnant women at the first prenatal visit. There are some other risk factors that may indicate more frequent testing (i.e.: drug users, incarcerated individuals, sex workers, street youth, etc.)

Please note that there is an 'incubation period', which is the length of time between infection and when symptoms appear or the test turns positive. It is about up to 1-3 weeks for the above STDs.

The swabs do not test for HIV/AIDS, hepatitis or syphilis (there are blood tests for these). There are no swabs for HPV in routine clinical practice, although the BC Cancer Agency uses it in selected cases. Indirectly, a Pap test can reveal it. Genital Herpes is tested with swabs but the test can turn positive only when there is a lesion present.