

# The Reddit Community asks the experts about STIs. Here's what we discovered...

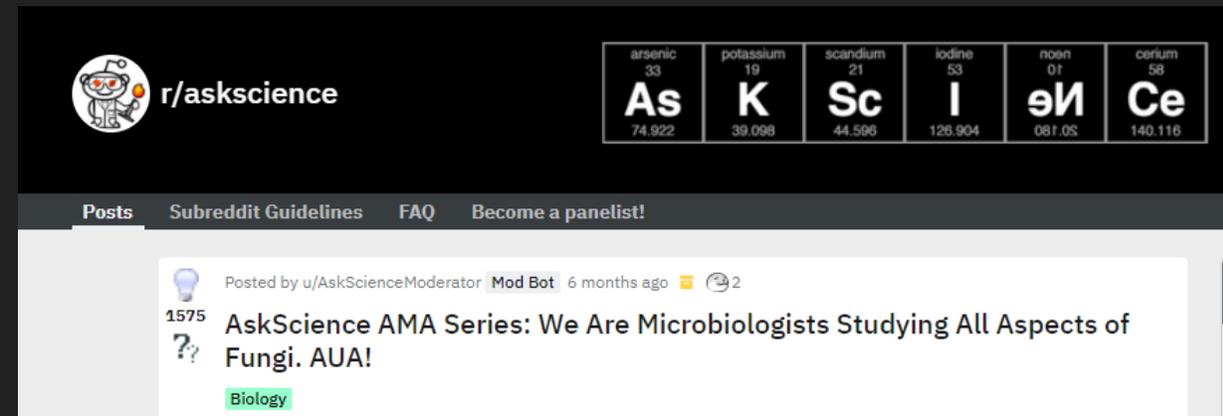
Discussion Panel

2022 Advancing HIV, STI and Viral Hepatitis Testing Conference

Wednesday March 30, 2022 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm EST

# What is a Reddit AMA?

- Reddit is a user-dominated website that promotes itself as “The Front Page of the Internet” (hence the name, Reddit = “read it”).
- It is one of the most visited websites globally, with more than 430 million active users and more than 30 billion page views monthly.
- A group of subject matter experts responding to comments and questions from users about a specific topic.
- The questions are submitted ahead of time and responses are text-based (no audio/video), so you can prepare and respond when comfortable.



The screenshot shows the r/askscience subreddit page. At the top, there is a header with the subreddit name 'r/askscience' and a table of chemical elements: arsenic (As, 33, 74.922), potassium (K, 19, 39.098), scandium (Sc, 21, 44.956), iodine (I, 53, 126.904), neon (Ne, 10, 20.180), and cerium (Ce, 58, 140.116). Below the header, there are navigation links: Posts, Subreddit Guidelines, FAQ, and Become a panelist!. The main content area shows a post by u/AskScienceModerator, a Mod Bot, posted 6 months ago. The post title is 'AskScience AMA Series: We Are Microbiologists Studying All Aspects of Fungi. AUA!' and it has 1575 upvotes. A 'Biology' tag is visible below the title.

- There are several microbiology-appropriate subreddits, including r/science, r/biology and r/microbiology

# Reddit AMA Planning

- Geoff Hunt, Public Outreach Program Officer with the American Society for Microbiology reached out to SMEs to ask if interested in participating
- Topic: Reddit Ask Me Anything (AMA) discussion about sexually-transmitted infections
- ASM Coordinated a pre-AMA meeting with panelists to prepare
- All panelists had to create a personal Reddit username
- The session went live 11/2/2022 @ 9am EST and questions were answered from 2-4pm EST

# Reddit Panel Participants

- Srishti Baid ([u/SB313\\_ScienceNerd](#))- Doctoral Student, University of Kansas 
- Jose Bazan, D.O. ([u/US-Nm-UClade\\_2015](#))- Infectious Diseases Physician, Associate Professor of Clinical Internal Medicine, The Ohio State University College of Medicine
- Megan Crumpler, Ph.D., HCLD ([u/Meganthemicro](#))- Laboratory Director, Orange County Public Health Laboratory 
- Miguel E. Quiñones-Mateu, Ph.D. ([u/MQM-Reddit](#))- Professor, Webster Family Chair in Viral Pathogenesis, University of Otago 
- Barbara Van Der Pol, Ph.D., M.P.H. ([u/BVDP59](#))- Professor of Medicine, University of Alabama at Birmingham 



arsenic 33 <b>As</b> 74.922	potassium 19 <b>K</b> 39.098	scandium 21 <b>Sc</b> 44.596	iodine 53 <b>I</b> 126.904	neon 01 <b>Ne</b> 081.05	cerium 58 <b>Ce</b> 140.116
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Posted by u/AskScienceModerator **Mod Bot** 4 months ago

1806  
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## AskScience AMA Series: We're Experts Here to Discuss Sexually Transmitted Infections. AUA!

Medicine

Let's talk about sex(ually transmitted infections [STIs])! We'll be here today at 2 PM ET for a discussion, organized by the American Society for Microbiology (ASM), about the present and future of STIs.

STIs are an enormous health issue. According to the [World Health Organization](#), there are approximately 1 million new infections daily worldwide, resulting in 2.3 million deaths every year. In the United States, [half](#) of new STIs occur among those ages 15-24. Meanwhile, increases in antimicrobial resistance are making it harder to treat and cure infections. STIs also represent a massive burden to the economy- in the United States alone, \$16 billion is [spent annually](#) on STI-related health care costs.

But it's not all bad news! Screening programs are increasing around the world, mother to child transmission rates of diseases such as chlamydia, syphilis and HIV are decreasing, and effective treatments are continuing to be developed and delivered to patients in need. Even better, new technologies, some of which were created rapidly as part of the national COVID-19 response effort, are making it easier for people to access routine sexual health maintenance services.

We're here to answer your questions and discuss causes and cures, as well as opportunities for improvements in diagnoses and prevention strategies. We'll also discuss the emergence of new diseases and how they can be contained.

PLEASE NOTE- WE WILL NOT BE MAKING PERSONAL DIAGNOSES OR RECOMMENDING TREATMENTS.

### About Community



r/askscience

Ask a science question, get a science answer.

22.0m  
Members

1.4k  
Online

Created Sep 5, 2008

Joined

Create Post

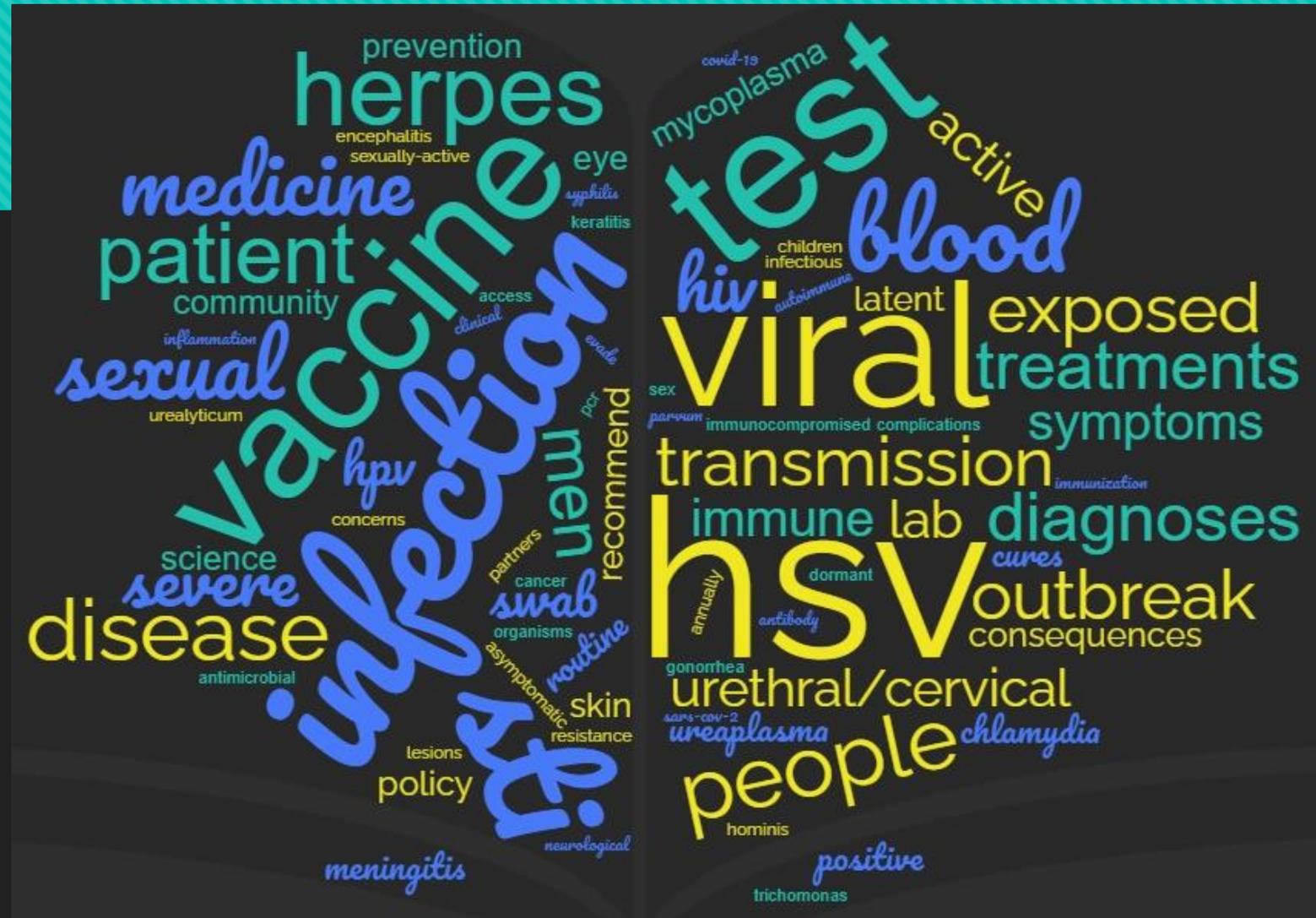
USER FLAIR PREVIEW



Meganthemicro  
STI AMA

COMMUNITY OPTIONS

- Some questions were pre-screened and removed by ASM moderator
- Total comments/questions = 325
- Upvotes = 1779
  - Users can rank through an “upvote” or a “downvote”.
  - Voting alters the visibility of a post, with more upvotes corresponding to a post appearing higher up in a user's scroll feed.



# Topic: Transmission

- We've all heard the myth of getting aids from a toilet seat, but is there any STD out there that actually DOES work that way? If so, what, and if not, why not?
- Can you get a STD or STI in your mouth and then transfer to it to your partner via oral sex? For example; Can you have Syphilis or Gonorrhea in your mouth and then give oral sex to a partner (no penetration via sex) and give them that STD?
- Hi there! Can you please help detail the relative risk of STD transmission between oral and anal sex (as the...penetrator)? I haven't been able to find any data on this and am curious! Thank you!

# Topic: Progress in STI Control

- How do you guys feel about the future? Will we get cures or vaccines for currently incurable STI's soonish
- Please can you list out all the vaccines available against all types of STDs?
- Will the new mRNA vaccines enable cures for stubborn herpes viruses? Or enable proper vaccination against some of these STIs?
- How come these are still a thing? Do you think that culturally, it is possible to increase awareness even more?
- How far or close are we from curing (not treating) HIV?
- I hear a lot about how HIV treatment has improved by leaps and bounds since the 90s, but not much about other STIs.

# Topic: STI Prevalence

- What percentage of the planet, or North America (where I am from) is Herpes positive?
- Has the pandemic response affected STI rates in any way?
- Do you think the rise of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis has anything to do with the increasing prevalence of syphilis and gonorrhea in the gay community?

# Topic: HPV

- What prevents us from being able to test for HPV in men? Is it accepted as a biological impossibility? Is there any recent or current research to indicate that it could one day be possible?
- Is there a health safety issue with receiving the HPV vaccine too late in life or are doctors just assuming I have all HPV's at this point and it's pointless to give it to me? I've been told after 30 it's not safe. But that's all they say.
- Why can older adults not get the HPV vaccine? Is it not effective or do insurance companies just not want to pay for it since we're likely less promiscuous?

# Topic: Miscellaneous

- When you take a broad spectrum antibiotic for something else like a sinus infection does it kill STIs? And even concerns for mycoplasma.
- Is ureaplasma an STI? What are the risks of non treatment?
- How worried should we be about symptomless STIs? Are they particularly common? If we're infected will we show other symptoms? Fatigue? Fever? Swollen lymph nodes? Or will we feel completely fine while still being able to transmit the infection?

# Summary

- Participating in the Reddit AMA session was interesting and FUN!
- The session gave great insight into what the public understands about STIs and opportunities for education
- If you get a chance to participate in an AMA – do it!
- Upcoming Reddit AskScience AMA Series

## Calendar

AskScience AMA Series: COVID in deer  
March 17, 2022

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AskScience AMA Series: The Gut Microbiome and Pancreatic Cancer  
March 21, 2022

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Ask Anything Wednesday - Economics, Political Science, Linguistics, Anthropology  
March 23, 2022

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AskScience AMA Series: All of Us Research Program  
March 28, 2022

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Ask Anything Wednesday - Physics, Astronomy, Earth and Planetary Science  
March 30, 2022

# Thank you

- AMA was organized by the ASM Communications Department
- AMA SMEs
  - Srishti Baid
  - Jose Bazan, D.O.
  - Megan Crumpler, Ph.D., HCLD
  - Miguel E. Quiñones-Mateu, Ph.D.
  - Barbara Van Der Pol, Ph.D., M.P.H.
- Link to Reddit feed:  
[https://www.reddit.com/r/askscience/comments/qkdhcy/askscience\\_ama\\_series\\_were\\_experts\\_here\\_to/?sort=new](https://www.reddit.com/r/askscience/comments/qkdhcy/askscience_ama_series_were_experts_here_to/?sort=new)