



Chlamydia and Gonorrhea

What are chlamydia and gonorrhea?

Chlamydia and gonorrhea are infections that you get from someone else by having sex. These infections are caused by bacteria that are passed to you from your sex partner. It is common to have chlamydia and gonorrhea at the same time. These infections can move up from your vagina and cervix (the opening to your uterus) to infect your uterus and fallopian tubes (tubes that carry your eggs from your ovaries to your uterus). Chlamydia and gonorrhea can also cause infection in the rectum and rarely in the mouth, throat, or eyes.

How do I know if I have chlamydia or gonorrhea?

Most women do not have any symptoms when they have chlamydia or gonorrhea. Some women have vaginal discharge, burning with urination, or bleeding between periods. Men who have chlamydia or gonorrhea may have a discharge from their penis or burning when they urinate. Your health care provider will use a cotton swab to get a small amount of fluid from your cervix or test your urine to see if you have chlamydia or gonorrhea.

How would I get chlamydia or gonorrhea?

You can get chlamydia or gonorrhea by having vaginal, oral, or anal sex with a person who has the infection. A man does not have to ejaculate (release semen) to pass the infection. You can get chlamydia and gonorrhea again after you are treated if you have sex before your sex partner is treated.

What are the risks of chlamydia and gonorrhea?

If you have chlamydia or gonorrhea and are not treated, you can get pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). This is a painful infection that can cause scarring in your fallopian tubes if it is not treated. The scarring can cause chronic pelvic pain or infertility (not being able to get pregnant). If you get pregnant after having PID, you can have an ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy that is outside the uterus and can't live).

When should I see my health care provider to be tested for chlamydia or gonorrhea?

You should see your health care provider to be tested for chlamydia or gonorrhea if you:

- Think or know you have had sex with a person who has chlamydia, gonorrhea, or another sexually transmitted infection.
- Think your sex partner was not treated for chlamydia or gonorrhea after you were treated.
- Have a male sex partner who has burning or discharge from his penis.
- Have sex with a new person.
- Are having sex with more than one person.
- Have had another sexually transmitted infection.
- Are younger than 25 years old. All women who are younger than 25 and having sex should have a test for chlamydia and gonorrhea once a year.

How is chlamydia treated?

You will be given antibiotic pills to treat chlamydia infection. You may take pills for several days or be given a medicine where all the pills are taken at one time. Take all the pills you are given. You should be retested for chlamydia 3 months after you are treated. If you are pregnant, you should have another chlamydia test 4 weeks after finishing the medicine. Do not have sex until both you and your sex partner have taken all the medicine you have been given. If you take the pills for 7 days, wait to have sex until you are done taking all the pills. If you take the one-time dose of pills, wait 7 days to have sex.



How is gonorrhea treated?

You will be given a shot of an antibiotic to treat gonorrhea. Because chlamydia is often found with gonorrhea, you may also be given antibiotic pills for chlamydia if you are treated for gonorrhea. You should be retested for gonorrhea 3 months after you are treated. Do not have sex until 7 days after both you and your sex partner have been treated, and you do not have any symptoms.

Does my partner have to be treated if I have chlamydia or gonorrhea?

Any sex partner you have had vaginal, oral, or anal sex with in the past 60 days should be tested and treated for chlamydia and gonorrhea. If it has been more than 60 days since you had sex, your last sex partner should be treated.

What if I am pregnant and have chlamydia or gonorrhea?

If you have chlamydia or gonorrhea and you are pregnant, you need to be treated with antibiotics right away. These medicines will not hurt your baby. Being treated lowers your chance of giving birth early and giving the infection to your baby at birth. If you are not treated and your baby is exposed to the infection at the time of birth, your baby can get an eye infection, pneumonia (infection in the lungs), or a very serious blood infection.

How can I keep from getting chlamydia and gonorrhea?

Some ways to prevent getting chlamydia and gonorrhea are:

- Use a condom every time you have vaginal, oral, or anal sex.
- Only have sex with one person who agrees to only have sex with you.
- Talk with your sex partner(s) about STIs and staying safe before having sex.
- Do not have sex with another person. This is the surest way to keep from getting chlamydia and gonorrhea.

For More Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Chlamydia: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/chlamydia/stdfact-chlamydia.htm>

Gonorrhea: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea/stdfact-gonorrhea.htm>

American Social Health Association

Chlamydia: <https://www.ashasexualhealth.org/chlamydia-101/>

Gonorrhea: <https://www.ashasexualhealth.org/gonorrhea/>

Office on Women's Health

Chlamydia: <https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/chlamydia>

Gonorrhea: <https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/gonorrhea>

Healthy Women

Chlamydia: <http://www.healthywomen.org/condition/chlamydia>

Gonorrhea: <http://www.healthywomen.org/condition/gonorrhea>

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