

Chlamydia

Chlamydia (klay-MID-dee-uh) is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a type of bacteria (*Chlamydia trachomatis*) that can be passed from one person to another during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. It most commonly affects people age 25 and younger.

How can I get chlamydia?

Chlamydia is usually spread during sex. It also can be passed from mother to newborn during delivery and cause serious problems. Because most people do not have symptoms, it is easy to spread the infection without knowing it.

What should I look for?

Women

Up to 90% of infected women have no symptoms. Of those who do, symptoms may include:

- Vaginal discharge
- Unusual vaginal bleeding
- Burning or pain with urination
- Pain during sex

Men

Up to 70% of infected men have no symptoms. Of those who do, symptoms may include:

- Burning or pain with urination
- Pain or itching in the head of the penis
- Discharge from the penis
- Pain, tenderness, or swelling of the testicle(s)

If you have anal sex, you could get chlamydia in the rectum. There are often no symptoms, but these infections may cause anal itching, pain, bleeding, or discharge. *If you have contracted rectal chlamydia, talk to your health care provider about the risk for HIV.*

Chlamydia can be transmitted to the throat by an infected penis during **oral sex**. Most of the time there are no symptoms

It may take weeks before symptoms appear, if at all, after becoming infected. The infected person can pass chlamydia to another sex partner.

Is chlamydia serious?

Yes! Chlamydia in women can lead to a serious infection called pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can damage the fallopian tubes and make a woman more likely to have a “tubal pregnancy” (outside the uterus) which can be fatal. PID can also lead to infertility- the inability to get pregnant.

How is chlamydia treated?

- Most often, treatment is with a one-time dose of an antibiotic pill. Sometimes, a different antibiotic is used and must be taken twice daily for seven days. Finish all of the pills you are given, even if you feel better before taking them all.
- Your sex partner(s) must be treated. Otherwise, they can give the infection back to you or infect others. You may ask for medicine to bring to your partner(s).
- Don't have sex for one full week after you start treatment. Don't have sex with your partner(s) while you are each taking your medicine.

How can I avoid getting or spreading chlamydia?

If you're thinking of having sex with a new partner:

1. Talk about STIs, including when each of you were last tested.
 - a. Men who have sex with men should be tested every 3-6 months.
 - b. Other men and women up to age 25 should be tested at least annually.
2. Male and female condoms are effective in reducing the risk of infection.
3. Do not have sex if you or a sexual partner has abnormal discharge, burning with urination, or any other symptom that could be due to an STI.

It is important to get tested again for chlamydia about 3 months after your treatment because if you have had chlamydia before, you are more likely to get it again.

For more information:

Please talk with your City Clinic clinician or your own health care provider. The following websites also offer helpful information:

General STD

www.ashsexualhealth.org (also in Espanol)
www.cdc.gov/std/
www.sfcityclinic.org
www.sfsi.org/

Contraception and STD/sex info

www.bedsider.org

Teens

www.iwannaknow.org
www.amplifyyourvoice.org (also in Espanol)
www.kidshealth.org/teen (also in Espanol)
www.scarleteen.com

For an STI check-up or treatment,
see your health care provider, local clinic, or come to:



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