

Gonorrhea

Gonorrhea (gon-or-ē-uh) is a **Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI)** caused by a type of bacteria, *N. gonorrhoea*. Gonorrhea can infect men and women. It is passed from one person to another during vaginal, anal and oral sex. It can be found in the throat, vagina, urethra and anus. Babies can be infected during birth, causing eye infections.

What are the symptoms of gonorrhea?

Men:

Symptoms in the penis usually appear within 10 days after being exposed. The following are symptoms to look for:

- Discharge from the head of the penis
- Pain or itching of the head of the penis
- Occasional swelling of the penis
- Pain with urination
- Occasionally, discharge may appear then go away without treatment. However, you may still be infected.

Throat:

Gonorrhea can be transmitted to the throat by an infected penis. Most of the time there are no symptoms although, it may cause a sore throat.

Rectum:

If gonorrhea infects the anus/rectum, there may be discharge, pain, bleeding, or anal itching. As in the throat, there may be no symptoms at all.

Women:

Most of the time women with gonorrhea have no symptoms. If symptoms develop they usually appear within 10 days after being exposed. The following are symptoms to look for:

- Discharge from the vagina
- Lower abdominal pain, especially with sex
- Unusual vaginal bleeding with cramping
- Pain with urination

Is gonorrhea serious?

- Yes! Gonorrhea in women can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a serious pelvic infection. In PID the gonorrhea bacteria move from the vagina up through the cervix and into the uterus, tubes and ovaries. Blockage and scarring can damage the tubes and make a woman more likely to have a “tubal pregnancy.” The scarring can also lead to infertility- the inability to get pregnant.
- Men can occasionally develop epididymitis, an infection of the testicles, which is painful and can cause sterility (blockage of sperm).
- **Gonorrhea can increase the risk of getting and passing HIV and other STDs. If you have been**

diagnosed with gonorrhea make sure you also get tested for HIV. Rectal gonorrhea puts you at particularly high risk of getting HIV.

How is gonorrhea treated?

- Your clinician will give you antibiotic medicine to kill the gonorrhea in your body. **Avoid** having sex (you and your partner) for **one full week** after your treatment.
- Your sex partner(s) must be examined and treated. If not treated, they can give the infection back to you, or infect others.

How can I avoid getting gonorrhea?

- Plan ahead! Protect yourself!
- If you're thinking of having sex with a new partner:
- Talk about STDs.
- Talk about having safer sex by using male or female condoms.

It is important to get tested again for gonorrhea about 3 months after your treatment because if you have had gonorrhea 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.ashasexualhealth.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 a STD check-up or treatment,
see your doctor, local clinic, or come to:



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