

PROTECT YOURSELF + PROTECT YOUR PARTNER

# chlamydia



## THE FACTS

- Chlamydia (cla MI dee a) is a sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Anyone can get chlamydia. It is very common among teens and young adults.
- Young, sexually active females need testing every year.
- Most people who have chlamydia don't know it. Often the disease has no symptoms.
- You can pass chlamydia to others without knowing it.
- Chlamydia is easy to treat and cure.
- If you do not treat chlamydia, it can lead to serious health problems.



**Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention**  
National Center for HIV/AIDS,  
Viral Hepatitis, STD, and  
TB Prevention



### HOW CAN I LOWER MY RISK FOR CHLAMYDIA?

- The surest way to prevent chlamydia is not to have sex or to have sex only with someone who's not infected and who has sex only with you.
- Condoms can reduce your risk of getting chlamydia if used the right way every single time you have sex.
- Washing the genitals, urinating, or douching after sex will not prevent any STD.

### HOW DOES SOMEONE GET CHLAMYDIA?

- You can get chlamydia by having sex with someone who has it.
- "Having sex" means having anal, oral, or vaginal sex.
- If you are a pregnant woman who has chlamydia, you can pass the infection to your baby.



### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CHLAMYDIA?

Many people with chlamydia don't know they have it because they have no symptoms.

#### IF YOU ARE A WOMAN

The majority of chlamydial infections in women do not cause any symptoms. You can get chlamydia in the cervix (opening to the womb), rectum, or throat. You may not notice any symptoms. But if you do have symptoms, you might notice:

- An unusual discharge, with a strong smell, from your vagina.
- Discomfort when you urinate and when you have sex.
- Irritation or itching around your genitals.

If the infection spreads, you might get lower abdominal pain, pain during sex, nausea, or fever.

#### IF YOU ARE A MAN

The majority of chlamydial infections in men do not cause any symptoms. You can get chlamydia in the urethra (inside the penis), rectum, or throat. You may not notice any symptoms. But if you do have symptoms, you might notice:

- A discharge from your penis.
- Burning when you urinate.
- Burning or itching around the opening of your penis.



### HOW CAN I FIND OUT IF I HAVE CHLAMYDIA?

Ask a doctor to give you a test for chlamydia. The test is easy and painless.



### WHEN SHOULD I BE TESTED?

#### IF YOU ARE A WOMAN

You should be tested for chlamydia at least once a year if you are:

- Younger than 25 and you're having sex.
- 25 and older and you're having sex with more than one partner.
- 25 and older and you have a new sex partner.
- Pregnant.

#### IF YOU ARE A MAN

See a doctor if your partner has chlamydia or symptoms that might be chlamydia. Gay, bisexual, and men who have sex with men should also be tested for chlamydia.

#### MEN AND WOMEN

See a doctor if your partner has chlamydia or symptoms that might be chlamydia.

### IF I HAVE CHLAMYDIA, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR MY PARTNER?

- Your partner may have chlamydia, too.
- Tell your recent sex partners, so they can get tested and treated.
- Avoid having sex until seven days after you've both started your treatment, so you don't re-infect each other.

### HOW IS CHLAMYDIA TREATED?

- Chlamydia can be treated and cured with antibiotics.
- Finish all of the medicine to be sure you are cured.
- Do not share your medicine with anyone. You need all of it.
- If you still have symptoms after treatment, go back to see the doctor.
- You should get tested again about three months after you finish your treatment. This is especially important if you are not sure if your partner was also treated.



### CAN I GET CHLAMYDIA AGAIN AFTER I'VE BEEN TREATED?

Yes, you can get chlamydia again. You can get it from an untreated partner or a new partner.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T GET TREATED?

### IF YOU ARE A WOMAN

- If untreated, chlamydia can spread into the uterus or fallopian tubes and cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a serious infection of the reproductive organs.
- PID can cause damage in your fallopian tubes. This damage may leave you unable to get pregnant or lead to an ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outside the uterus).
- PID may also cause chronic pain in your pelvic area.
- If you have untreated chlamydia, you could pass the infection to your baby when giving birth. Chlamydia can cause serious health problems for babies.



### IF YOU ARE A MAN

Chlamydia rarely causes long-term health problems in men. You may get an infection in the tube that carries sperm from the testes. This infection can cause pain and fever. In rare cases, this infection may prevent you from fathering children.



## A MESSAGE FOR EVERYONE

### PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR PARTNER.

Always see a doctor if your partner is being treated for chlamydia. You and your partner need to be treated. Also, see the doctor if you or your partner notice any symptoms, such as an unusual discharge. Be sure to tell your recent sex partners, so they can get tested, too. Talk openly and honestly with your partner about chlamydia and other STDs.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Talk to your doctor.
- Call 1-800-CDC-INFO.
- Visit [www.cdc.gov/std/chlamydia](http://www.cdc.gov/std/chlamydia)



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