

Chlamydia

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a bacteria (*Chlamydia trachomatis*).

How do I get chlamydia?

Chlamydia is passed between people through unprotected sexual contact (oral, vaginal, or anal sex without a condom). You can infect others right after you come in contact with chlamydia. You can spread it to others without knowing it.

How can I prevent chlamydia?

When you're sexually active, the best way to prevent chlamydia is to use condoms for oral, vaginal, and anal sex.

Don't have any sexual contact if you or your partner(s) have symptoms of an STI, or may have been exposed to an STI. See a doctor or go to an STI Clinic for testing.

Get STI testing every 3 to 6 months and when you have symptoms.

How do I know I have chlamydia?

Up to 90% of people with chlamydia don't have symptoms. The infection can be in the rectum, penis, cervix, throat, and the eye. If you have chlamydia, you may have:

- pain or burning when you pee
- discharge, bleeding, or itching from the bum
- redness and/or discharge from one or both eyes

Other symptoms in **females** include:

- unusual vaginal discharge
- irregular bleeding (often after sex)
- pain in the abdomen, low back, or during sex

Other symptoms in **males** include:

- watery or milky discharge from the penis
- irritation or itching inside the penis
- painful or swollen testicles

The best way to find out if you have chlamydia is to get tested. Your nurse or doctor can test you by taking a swab and/or doing a urine test.

Is chlamydia harmful?

If not treated, chlamydia can cause **serious** long-term effects including infertility and arthritis. Other effects in females include pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and a higher risk of having a tubal pregnancy. Other effects in males include pain/swelling in the testicles (epididymo-orchitis) and urinary tract problems.

These effects can be prevented if you get **early STI testing and treatment**.

What if I'm pregnant?

If not treated, chlamydia can cause early delivery or rupture of membranes. If the female isn't treated and has a vaginal delivery, it can cause serious eye and lung infections for the baby. Get tested and treated **before** delivery to prevent these problems.

How is chlamydia treated?

Chlamydia is treated with antibiotics. Your partner(s) also needs to be tested and treated, even if there are no symptoms.

You can get re-infected if you have unprotected sex with someone before he or she is treated.

When can I have sex again?

It will take 1 week for the antibiotic to get rid of the infection. Don't have unprotected sex (oral, vaginal, or anal sex without a condom) for **7 days** after you and your partner(s) have been treated. The best protection is **not** to have sex (oral, vaginal, or anal) for at least 7 days.

If you still have symptoms, don't have any sexual contact.

For More Information

- STI/HIV Information Line: 1-800-772-2437
- www.myhealth.alberta.ca
- www.sexgerms.com



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