

How can you avoid getting Chlamydia and/or passing it on to your partner(s)?

- Learn about safer sex methods.
- Make informed decisions. Talk to your partner(s) about STIs and the use of safer sex tools.
- Use condoms on penises or dildos for vaginal or anal sex, latex gloves for finger play and dams for oral sex to lower your chances of getting Chlamydia and other STIs.
- Get tested for Chlamydia if you are sexually active every time you have a new partner or your partner has a new partner.
- If you are diagnosed with Chlamydia, be sure to follow your clinician's instructions for treatment and follow up.
- If you are diagnosed with Chlamydia, it is important that you, someone from Public Health, or your clinic notify your past sexual partners so they can be tested and treated.

For further information or to book an appointment:

For youth ages 13-29 - Planned Parenthood Toronto Health Services

Offers drop-in and scheduled appointments
Call 416-961-0113 or visit www.ppt.on.ca.

Teen Health Source

Offers anonymous and confidential sexual health information for teens by teens.
MSN chat TeenHealthSource@hotmail.com, email TeenHealthSource@ppt.on.ca,
call 416-961-3200 or visit www.TeenHealthSource.com.

For women - Bay Centre for Birth Control

Offers drop-in and scheduled appointments
Call 416-351-3700

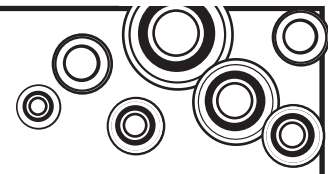
Planned Parenthood Toronto is a United Way Member Agency and a Registered Charity,
No. 1190-94449-RR0001

Funding for Planned Parenthood Toronto has been provided by the Toronto Central Local
Health Integration Network.

REVISED AUGUST 2009

STIs Series

Chlamydia



What is Chlamydia?

- Chlamydia is caused by the bacteria *Chlamydia trachomatis*.
- It is an infection of the reproductive tract and/or urinary tracts (and sometimes the throat or rectum).

How do you get Chlamydia?

- You can get Chlamydia if you have unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sex with a person who already has it.
- A pregnant woman with Chlamydia can also pass it on to her baby during vaginal childbirth.

How do you know if you have Chlamydia?

- More than 50% of infected men and 70% of infected women have no symptoms and are not aware that they have the infection.
- You can pass on Chlamydia without knowing you have it.
- The only way to know you have Chlamydia is to be tested.
- If symptoms do occur, they usually appear within 2 to 6 weeks after exposure but it can take longer for symptoms to appear.

Symptoms in women*:

- Unusual vaginal discharge
- Itchy vagina
- Unusual vaginal odour
- A little bit of bleeding even when it is not time for your period
- Pain during vaginal sex
- Pain in your lower abdomen or low back pain
- Pain when you urinate

*the terms men/women/male/female refer to physical sex not gender identity.

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Symptoms in men:

- Unusual discharge from the penis
- Burning or itching around the hole of the penis
- Burning when you urinate
- Pain or swelling of the testicles (but this is uncommon)

Anal Infection:

- Pain in the rectum (butt)
- Bleeding from the rectum
- Discharge from the rectum

Throat Infection:

- Those infected through oral sex generally have few symptoms

How can you get tested for Chlamydia?

- In men, a urine test is performed. You should not pee for 2 hours before the urine test.
- In women, a swab is taken from the cervix, the opening to the uterus. There is also a urine test for women, but it is not as common.
- Remember, Chlamydia testing is not included in a woman's pap test. Ask specifically for a Chlamydia test.
- A pregnant woman can pass Chlamydia on to her baby during vaginal childbirth. If you are pregnant and have not been tested for Chlamydia, talk to your prenatal care provider.
- Chlamydia in the throat or rectum is tested for by a swab of the area.

How is Chlamydia treated?

- Chlamydia can be treated and cured with a single dose of antibiotics.
- If you have Chlamydia, you should not have sex until you and your partner(s) have been treated and waited at least 1 week after finishing treatment to prevent re-infection.
- Positive tests for Chlamydia must be reported to Public Health. You will be contacted by a Public Health nurse or someone from your clinic to get contact information for your current and past sexual partners so they can notify them and ensure they get tested and treated if necessary. They will not disclose your name.

- Or, alternatively, you can contact current and past sexual partners yourself. If you wish to do so anonymously, you can use an email program called www.inspot.org.

Do you need a follow-up test?

- Yes. You should have another test. Current recommendations suggest you repeat testing six months after treatment. The only way to be sure that you are cured and can no longer pass on the infection is to do the follow up test after you have taken all the antibiotic pills.
- Do not have oral, vaginal or anal sex (even with a condom) while you and your sexual partner(s) are being treated and for at least 1 week after treatment is done.
- In general, it will be safe to have sex 1 week after both you and your partner(s) have completed the entire duration of antibiotic treatments, provided all symptoms have disappeared.
- If your partner(s) is/are not treated, there is a high risk that you will be re-infected.

What if I have Chlamydia and I don't get treated?

In women:

- Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)
 - The infection can spread to the uterus and fallopian tubes causing permanent damage.
 - The damage can lead to pelvic pain, infertility (inability to have children) and possibly an ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outside the uterus).
 - The symptoms include abdominal pain, fever, and long-lasting pelvic pain.
- A pregnant woman can also pass Chlamydia on to her baby during childbirth.

In men:

- Scarring of the urethra (pee hole) making urination difficult and possibly causing infertility.
- Infection of the epididymis (the tube that carries the sperm to the testis) causing pain, fever and rarely, infertility.

In both:

- Reiter's Syndrome (a type of arthritis that affects the joints and may also lead to skin lesions and inflammation of the eye).
- Chlamydia infection can increase the chance of getting HIV.