

Chlamydia General Information

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection caused by a bacteria. Chlamydia is one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases in North America.

Who can get chlamydia?

Chlamydia is spread through oral, vaginal or anal intercourse. Babies can also get infected during vaginal delivery when a mother has chlamydia.

What are the symptoms?

The majority of people have no symptoms. For those people who get symptoms, the symptoms appear 2-6 weeks after the person has had sexual contact with anyone with chlamydia. Symptoms may include:

Females	Males
Discharge from vagina	Discharge from penis
Pain in the lower abdomen	Pain when urinating
Bleeding after intercourse	Pain in one or both testicles
Pain when urinating	Rectal pain
Pain during sex	Rectal bleeding
Rectal pain	Discharge from the rectum
Rectal bleeding	
Discharge from the rectum	

Babies who are infected with chlamydia can get an eye infection few days to several weeks after birth. Symptoms may include redness in one or both eyes, discharge or swelling of the eyelids.

What is the treatment?

A health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) will test you for chlamydia and prescribe an antibiotic if the test is positive. The health care provider may retest you after the treatment stops. If chlamydia is not treated, it may cause inflammation in a woman's pelvis. This is called Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID). PID can be very serious and may affect a woman's ability to get pregnant.

Chlamydia treatment does not protect a person from getting it again. If a person is treated and their sex partner(s) are not, the bacteria will be able to pass back to the person again. It is important for the person who is diagnosed with chlamydia and their sex partner(s) to avoid having sex for a period of time advised by their health care provider.

How can you prevent chlamydia?

You can reduce your risk of getting chlamydia by practicing safer sex by:

- Limiting the number of sexual partners you have.
- Using a latex or polyurethane condom and/or oral dam consistently and correctly every time you have sex, including oral and anal sex.
- Not sharing sex toys; and to ensure they are cleaned and disinfected after each use.