



Chlamydia Fact Sheet

Chlamydia (cla-MID-ee-ah) is a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) caused by a type of bacteria called *Chlamydia trachomatis*. Chlamydia can infect men, women, and newborns. Chlamydia is the most common bacterial STD in the United States.

Q: How is chlamydia spread?

A: Chlamydia passes from one person to another during vaginal and anal sex. It also passes to the throat through oral sex (penis in mouth) – or from the throat to the penis. A pregnant woman can pass chlamydia to her baby during birth, causing serious eye infections and pneumonia (a serious lung infection).

Q: What are the signs and symptoms of chlamydia?

A: Most WOMEN with chlamydia have NO SYMPTOMS!
If you do have symptoms, they could include:

- Fluid from the vagina that smells, looks, or feels different;
- Bleeding from the vagina or the anus that is not normal;
- Pain with urination;
- Lower stomach pain, especially when having sex.

Most MEN with chlamydia have NO SYMPTOMS!

If you do have symptoms, they could include:

- Fluid from the head of the penis or the anus that is not normal;
- Pain or itching on the head of the penis;
- Pain with urination.

 **EVEN WITHOUT SYMPTOMS, A PERSON WITH CHLAMYDIA CAN GIVE CHLAMYDIA TO A SEX PARTNER(S).**

Q: Is chlamydia serious?

A: Yes! Even without symptoms, chlamydia can cause serious health problems.

Women who have chlamydia can get pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a very bad infection in the lower abdomen. PID happens when the bacteria move up into the womb, female organs, and surrounding areas. PID can cause scars and other damage that make women infertile (unable to have children). PID can also make women more likely to have a “tubal pregnancy”, which can cause death.

Men can sometimes develop an infection of the testicles that causes pain and swelling.

Newborns can develop serious eye and lung infections.

 **PLUS, A PERSON WITH CHLAMYDIA HAS A GREATER CHANCE OF GIVING OR GETTING HIV.**

Q: How is chlamydia treated?

- A:**
- Your health care provider will give you medicine to cure chlamydia infection.
 - If you have chlamydia, your partner(s) must be treated, even if they have no symptoms. If they are not treated, they can give the infection back to you, or infect others.
 - It is important to get tested again for chlamydia about 3 months after your treatment.
 - If you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant, be sure to tell your doctor or nurse.
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Q: How can I avoid getting chlamydia?

- A:**
- Abstinence (not having sex) is the only sure way to avoid infection.
 - Plan Ahead:** Think about protecting yourself. Talk with your sex partner(s) about STDs and the need to protect yourself. Then, you can choose not to have sex (abstinence), or decide to:
 - Use a male condom with each sex partner.
 - Use a female condom when a male condom cannot be used.
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HIV IS ALSO A STD!

When you catch chlamydia, you could also be getting HIV.

Birth control pills or a birth control shot cannot protect you against chlamydia or other STDs.



USING LATEX CONDOMS CORRECTLY EVERY TIME YOU HAVE SEX CAN REDUCE THE CHANCE FOR TRANSMISSION OF CHLAMYDIA, HIV, AND OTHER STDs.

Q: Where can I get more information about STDs and referrals for STD testing?

- A:**
- **Phone:** Talk to a trained operator who can answer your questions and provide information about STD testing. **In English and Español 24 hours/day, 7 days/week:** Toll-free: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636); TTY for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing: 1-888-232-6348
 - **Internet:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/std/>
http://www.cdc.gov/std/healthcomm/fact_sheets.htm

Talk to your own health care provider, or call your county health department by looking for the telephone number in the phone book (white pages) under county government. Ask to speak to someone in the STD clinic or STD program for more information about chlamydia.