



Chlamydia

What is chlamydia?

- Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the bacteria *Chlamydia trachomatis*. It is very common among sexually active youth, although it can occur at any age.
- Without treatment chlamydia can lead to serious health problems especially for women.

How can you get chlamydia?

- When you have unprotected oral, vaginal, or anal sex with an infected person.
- If infected fluid comes in contact with your eyes either directly or spread by hand
- If you are pregnant you can pass it to your baby while giving birth.

How can you tell if you have chlamydia?

Many people who have chlamydia do not have any signs of infection. You can pass chlamydia to someone else without even knowing it.

Men might notice one or more of:

- a discharge from the penis
- a burning feeling when you pee
- pain in the testicles
- itching at end of the penis

Women might notice one or more of:

- an unusual discharge from the vagina
- a burning feeling when you pee
- pain in the lower abdomen
- abnormal vaginal bleeding e.g. between periods, during or after having sex
- pain during sex

In both men and women:

- An oral infection may have no symptoms.
- An anal infection may have symptoms such as pain, bleeding and discharge.
- Rarely chlamydia may affect the eye and cause redness and discharge

How do you get tested for chlamydia?

Both men and women can have a test for chlamydia simply by giving a urine sample or by having a swab taken from the infected area.

For the urine test, it is important not to pee for two hours before the test is taken.

Testing for gonorrhoea can be done at the same time.

How is chlamydia treated?

When you test positive for chlamydia you and your partner(s) must be treated. A health care provider will prescribe an antibiotic that will easily treat and cure chlamydia.

It is important to:

- treat chlamydia to avoid serious infection, re-infection and complications.
- take and finish all the medication
- not have oral, vaginal or anal sex during treatment and for seven days after both you and your partner have finished treatment.

Over 

Who can you talk to if you have more questions?

If you have concerns or questions call and ask for Sexual Health, or visit our youth website at www.thephakz.ca, or the health unit website below.



**simcoe
muskoka**
DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

Tel: 721-7520
Toll free: 1-877-721-7520
www.simcoemuskokahealth.org

Your Health Connection

Do you need follow-up?

You may need to be tested after treatment if:

- you vomited the medication
- there is a chance you were re-infected
- you are pregnant.
- your symptoms did not go away

Everyone who has tested positive for chlamydia should have the test repeated in six months.

You can expect to be contacted by a nurse from the health unit who will talk with you about the treatment and prevention of this infection in the future. The nurse will also talk to you about your partner(s).

- If you are pregnant with untreated chlamydia your baby could get severe eye or lung infections
- For Men:
 - Can cause pain and swelling in the testicles
 - It can occasionally cause sterility
- For both men and women:
 - Untreated chlamydia can spread to your joints and cause arthritis (called Reiter's syndrome).

Updated March 2011

How do you protect yourself and others?

- Abstain from sex or limit your number of sex partners
- Make informed decisions by talking to your partner about his/her sexual health and the use of protection, BEFORE having sex
- Always use condoms or barriers for vaginal, oral and anal sex
- Get an STI check up—especially if you've had a new sex partner, more than one sex partner, or suspect you have an infection
- Ask your partner(s) to get tested before you have sex
- Not all STIs can be routinely tested.
- Consider getting immunized for STIs such as hepatitis B and Human Papillomavirus (HPV).
- Recognize that alcohol and drug use prior to sex can affect your decision to have safer sex.

Are there any special concerns about chlamydia?

- Because there are often no symptoms, you may not seek medical attention. If the infection is not treated you may develop serious health problems.
- Chlamydia can increase the risk of transmission of HIV
- For women:
 - Can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), causing pain and increasing the risk of scarring in the fallopian tubes which can lead to tubal (ectopic) pregnancy or infertility