



CHLAMYDIA

WHAT IS CHLAMYDIA?

Chlamydia trachomatis is a common bacterial sexually transmitted infection, in both men and women. It can cause infection in the cervix in women, urethra in men, anus, throat and occasionally in the eyes of both men and women.

HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

Chlamydia is transmitted by vaginal, anal or oral sex. Condoms decrease its transmission.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Most men and women have no symptoms. If symptoms are present, they include

Men

- Redness at the opening of the penis
- Stinging or burning when passing urine
- A discharge from the penis (which is often clear in colour)

If not treated, Chlamydia may cause pain and swelling in the testicles.

Women

- A change in vaginal discharge
- Irregular bleeding (especially after sex)
- Pelvic pain, including pain during sexual intercourse
- Stinging or burning when passing urine

If not treated, Chlamydia may cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) which is infection of the uterus and fallopian tubes. PID may lead to infertility.

HOW DO YOU TEST FOR CHLAMYDIA?

Chlamydia is tested for by taking a swab from the cervix, vagina or anus, or on a urine sample.

HOW IS CHLAMYDIA TREATED?

Treatment is simple and effective with antibiotics; azithromycin or doxycycline. However, if complications are suspected, a longer course of treatment is given.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE THE SYMPTOMS TO GO AWAY AFTER TREATMENT?

The symptoms will usually start to ease over a few days after treatment. If you are still experiencing problems after a week you should see your doctor again.

WHEN IS IT SAFE TO HAVE SEX AGAIN?

- You should not have any sexual contact for one week after completion of treatment. (Not even sex with a condom).
- You must not have sex with any partners until one week after they are treated.
- If your partner is treated after you, this means no sex until one week after they are treated. Otherwise you could be reinfected, and would need further treatment.

DO I LET MY PARTNERS KNOW?

- Yes, you should tell all your sexual partners in the last 3 months to get tested and treated, (even if you think you know who you got this infection from).
- Chlamydia often has no symptoms, so it's still important for your partners to be tested and treated even if they show no sign of infection.

HOW CAN I LET MY PARTNERS KNOW?

Most people find this is best done directly, either in person or via phone call or text message. If you don't feel comfortable contacting partners personally, there are two websites enabling you to send a free and anonymous text message or email:

- **Let Them know**
www.letthemknow.org.au, this website is available for anyone to use.
- **Drama Down Under**
www.thedramadownunder.info/notify, this website is specifically for gay men, or men with male sexual partners, and allows you to contact several people in one go.

HOW DO I AVOID RE-INFECTION?

Your best protection against reinfection is by notifying your partners, ensuring that current partners are treated and consistent condom use with all future partners.

TEST OF RE-INFECTION

We recommend a repeat test at 1 month after treatment for anal chlamydia and 3 months after treatment of other sites of infection

DISCLAIMER:

This fact sheet is designed to provide you with information on Chlamydia. It is not intended to replace the need for a consultation with your doctor. All clients are strongly advised to check with their doctor about any specific questions or concerns they may have. Every effort has been taken to ensure that the information in this pamphlet is correct at the time of printing.