

# CHLAMYDIA

---

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.

---

## *How is chlamydia spread?*

Chlamydia is passed from one person to another during vaginal and anal sex. It may also be spread to the throat through oral sex and to the eyes by touching fluids from the vagina or penis and then touching the eyes. Newborn babies whose mothers have chlamydia can get it during birth, causing serious eye infections and pneumonia.

## *How do I know if I have chlamydia?*

- *80% of infected WOMEN have NO SYMPTOMS!*

If you do have symptoms they could include:

- Discharge from the vagina that smells, looks, or feel different
- Abnormal bleeding from the vagina or the anus
- Pain with urination
- Lower stomach pain, especially when having sex

- *50% of infected MEN 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 with urination
- Pain or itching of the head of the penis

**Even without symptoms, a person with chlamydia can still give chlamydia to their sex partner(s).**

## *Is chlamydia serious?*

- **Yes!** Women who have chlamydia can get Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID), a very bad pelvic infection in women. PID happens when the bacteria move from the cervix into the uterus, fallopian tubes and ovaries. PID can cause scars and other damage that makes women infertile (unable to have children). PID can also block the tubes and make women more likely to have a “tubal pregnancy,” which can cause death.
- Men can sometimes get epididymitis, an infection of the epididymis (the organ on top of the testicles that stores sperm) that causes pain and swelling.
- **Plus**, if you get infected with chlamydia, you increase your chances of getting HIV.

## *How is chlamydia treated?*

- Your doctor/nurse will give you antibiotic medicine to cure your chlamydia infection. (There is a one-dose treatment available so ask your doctor or nurse for more information.)
- Do not share your medicine with anyone.
- Your sex partner(s) should be seen by a doctor/nurse, and get tested and treated. If they are not treated, they can give the infection back to you or infect others.
- Do not have sex while you and your partner(s) are taking the medicine **and** for the 7 days after you and your partner(s) finish your medicine. This is how long it takes to get treated. If you **must** have sex before you and your partner(s) are treated, use a condom to prevent getting chlamydia again.

## *How can I avoid getting chlamydia?*

- ✓ Plan ahead! Protect yourself! Condoms are the best protection!
- ✓ If you're thinking of having sex with a new partner: Talk about STDs.
- ✓ Suggest an STD check-up for both of you **before** having sex.
- ✓ Birth control pills or a birth control shot cannot protect you against chlamydia.

---

***Using condoms correctly every time you have sex can prevent chlamydia and HIV.***

---