

What You Need to Know Chlamydia 101

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What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) affecting people of all sexes. Chlamydia can be cured with medication.

Left untreated, chlamydia can cause permanent damage to the uterus and fallopian tubes and may lead to infertility in people with those organs. Sexually active people with these organs under the age of 25 years—or those older than 25 who have a new sexual partner, multiple partners, or a partner with an STI—should be tested for chlamydia every year.

What are the symptoms of chlamydia?

Chlamydia can initially present with symptoms of discharge from the genitals and a burning sensation during urination. People with testicles may notice pain and/or swelling in one or more testes. Chlamydial infection of the rectum can cause pain, discharge, or bleeding from the area.

If left untreated, chlamydia can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in people with a uterus. PID can result in irreversible damage to the uterus and fallopian tubes, leading to infertility and an increased risk of ectopic pregnancy—a potentially fatal pregnancy that occurs outside of the uterus.

Chlamydial infection in an infant may result in pneumonia (a lung infection) and/or conjunctivitis (infection and inflammation of the eye).

How can you catch chlamydia?

You can get chlamydia through vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who is infected.

Prior infection with chlamydia does not protect you from getting chlamydia again.

Chlamydia can be spread to babies during childbirth. Pregnant people with chlamydia should talk with their doctor.

Is chlamydia treatable/curable?

Chlamydia is easily cured with antibiotics. Taking every dose of the antibiotics as prescribed is critical to ensure the infection is cured. Talk with your doctor if your symptoms do not go away within a few days after completing your antibiotic course.

It's important to abstain from sex for seven days following your first dose of antibiotics to prevent spreading chlamydia to any sexual partners.

If you have chlamydia, your doctor may be able to prescribe antibiotics for your sexual partner(s) without needing to see them.

Infants who get chlamydia during childbirth can be cured with antibiotics.

Preventing chlamydia transmission

Use of condoms and other barrier devices during vaginal, anal, and oral sex can help reduce spread of chlamydia but do not completely eliminate the risk.

There is no vaccine against infection with chlamydia.

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