What you should know about PID

What is PID?

"PID" stands for Pelvic Inflammatory Disease. It is a serious infection of the female reproductive organs (uterus, fallopian tubes, ovaries, and cervix). If not treated early, PID can lead to serious, life-threatening health problems for women.

How do women get PID?

PID can be sexually transmitted or it can occur naturally. Most cases of PID occur when a woman does not receive prompt treatment for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) like gonorrhea and chlamydia. Other bacteria or germs can also cause PID.

What are the symptoms of PID?

- Dull pain in the stomach/abdominal/pelvic area
- Increased or foul-smelling discharge from the vagina
- Irregular periods or bleeding between periods
- Pain or bleeding during sex
- Pain during urination (peeing)
- Back pain
- Fever, chills, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting

REMEMBER: Some people have very mild symptoms or no symptoms at all, but PID can still cause damage to sex organs even when there are no symptoms. You can still pass STDs to your sex partners, too.

What could happen if I have PID?

It is very important to have PID treated quickly! Rapid treatment can prevent serious health problems such as:

- **Infertility** (not being able to have children). PID is the leading cause of infertility for women in the U.S.
- **Ectopic (tubal) pregnancy** and other pregnancy-related problems that could be life-threatening for you and your baby.
- Miscarriage.
- Cystitis (inflammation of the urinary bladder).
- Constant pain in the pelvic area.

How do I know if I have PID?

You will need to have tests done at your doctor's office or an STD clinic. Your health care provider will also talk to you about what problems or symptoms you are having. Some people with PID may need to be hospitalized.

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How is PID treated?

PID can be treated with medications prescribed by a doctor. You may have to take more than one medicine at a time.

If you have PID:

- Follow your health care provider's instructions.
- Finish the medicine prescribed to you - even if you start to feel better before it's gone.
- Call your health care provider as soon as possible if the medicine gives you problems.
- See a doctor immediately if the pain becomes worse or if you have a high fever (higher than 100° F).
- Tell your sex partner(s) to get tested and treated, or ask your health care provider to tell them.
- **Don't have sex** until a health care provider says both you and your partner(s) are treated and cured.
- Don't try to treat yourself.
- Don't share your medicine.

How can I prevent PID?

- Don't have sex. Vaginal, oral, and anal sex can all pass the STDs that cause PID from one person to another.
- If you do have sex, use a latex condom every time. When used the right way, condoms can help keep you from getting an STD that could lead to PID.
- Be sure to put the condom on before the penis touches the vagina, mouth, or anus.
- Get tested for STDs if you might be at risk–even if you don't have symptoms.
- If you have sex, stay with one partner who only has sex with you. Use condoms unless tests show that your partner does not have STDs.
- Don't douche unless directed to do so by a doctor.
- Don't have sex for six weeks after having a baby.
- Don't have sex for two weeks after having a miscarriage, abortion, or a D&C.
- Use condoms for two weeks after having an IUD (intrauterine device) inserted.
- Don't have vaginal sex right after having anal sex.
- After using the bathroom, always wipe from front to back.

For HIV/STD testing locations in Texas, call: 2-1-1

For other HIV/STD questions, call:
1 (800) CDC-INFO (English/Español)
1 (888) 232-6348 (TTY)

For more information, go to: www.dshs.state.tx.us/hivstd

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