

What You Should Know About Chlamydia and Gonorrhea

Where can I learn more?

Go to knowmystatus.org to learn more about STDs, including chlamydia and gonorrhea, and to find out where to go for testing, support, and treatment in Texas.

For more information on STDs, visit the DSHS website: dshs.texas.gov/hivstd/info

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



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Texas Department of State
Health Services

For HIV/STD questions, call
737-255-4300

or visit
dshs.texas.gov/hivstd

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What are chlamydia and gonorrhea?

Chlamydia and gonorrhea are sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) that affect millions of people every year. Both STDs spread through vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has either disease. Babies can also get either disease at birth if the mother has one or both diseases.

How do I know if I have chlamydia or gonorrhea?

Many people who get either chlamydia or gonorrhea have no symptoms. When symptoms do occur, they may not appear until weeks later. Some symptoms shared by chlamydia and gonorrhea are:

- Painful or frequent urination
- Rectal and anal pain or itching
- Bleeding between periods (women)
- Stomach or abdominal pain (women)
- Discharge from the vagina or penis

Symptoms unique to chlamydia are:

- Pain during sex (women)
- Pain or swelling in the testicles (men)

Symptoms unique to gonorrhea are:

- Pus from the penis, vagina, or anus
- Burning sensation when urinating
- Pain in the lower back or belly (women)

Even if these symptoms go away on their own, you need to get checked by your doctor.

Should I get tested?

The only way to know if you have an STD like chlamydia or gonorrhea is to get tested. Your doctor may ask you to provide a urine sample or swab your cervix, penis, rectum, or throat. Getting tested and treated early is the key to avoiding serious health problems.

You should get tested for STDs if:

- You or your partner(s) have experienced any symptoms.
- You have had multiple sex partners.
- You have had sex without a condom.
- You become pregnant.
- You have another STD.
- Your partner(s) are receiving treatment for an STD.

You should get tested once a year if:

- You are a sexually active woman age 25 or younger.
- You are a woman with new or multiple sex partners.
- You are a man who has sex with other men.

Is there a cure for chlamydia or gonorrhea?

Yes. Taking medication prescribed by your doctor can cure both chlamydia and gonorrhea. However, your sex partner(s) must also receive treatment, or you could get infected again.

Some strains of gonorrhea are resistant to medication. If your symptoms persist for more than a few days after treatment, talk to your doctor.

If you are diagnosed with an STD:

- Take all the medication prescribed to you.
- Do not share your medication.
- Ask your sex partner(s) to get tested.
- Do not have sex until a doctor confirms that you and your partner(s) are cured.
- Do not try to treat the infection yourself.
- Get re-tested three months after completing your treatment.

What happens if I do not get treatment for chlamydia or gonorrhea?

Both chlamydia and gonorrhea can cause lasting damage to the body if left untreated.

Untreated chlamydia can cause:

- Ectopic pregnancy: a potentially deadly pregnancy outside of the uterus (women)
- Chronic pelvic pain (women)
- Severe pain in the penis and testicles (men)
- Eye and lung problems (babies)

Untreated gonorrhea can cause:

- Swelling in the testicles (men)
- Heart problems
- Arthritis
- Eye infection that can lead to blindness (babies)

Untreated chlamydia and gonorrhea can cause:

- Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a serious infection of the female sex organs (women)
- Infertility (women) or sterility (men), the inability to conceive or carry children

What about HIV and STDs?

Untreated STDs like chlamydia and gonorrhea can increase your chances of passing or catching human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). If you get tested for STDs, you should also get tested for HIV.

How can I stay healthy?

To reduce the risk of STDs, you should only have sex with one partner who only has sex with you. Use a condom every time unless tests confirm that you and your partner do not have any STDs. When used correctly, condoms can help prevent passing or catching STDs.

The only sure way to prevent STDs is to not have sex.