

CHLAMYDIA

Québec 

Information for the infected person and his/her sexual partners

Chlamydia is one of the most widespread sexually transmitted diseases (STD). This infection is caused by a microbe that is transmitted from person to person by sexual contact.

CHLAMYDIA

HOW IS CHLAMYDIA SPREAD?

- During vaginal or anal intercourse without a condom. It is possible that chlamydia be spread during oral sex but this is very rare.
- It can also be spread from an infected mother to her baby during childbirth.

ARE THERE SYMPTOMS?

Usually, chlamydia has no symptoms. It is possible to be infected and not even know it. In this case, the only way to find out if you are infected is to ask your physician to test you for this STD.

If symptoms do occur, they can be difficult to recognize and can come and go. The symptoms are:

- abnormal vaginal discharge;
- bleeding after sexual intercourse;
- painful intercourse during deep penetration;
- discharge from the penis;
- a burning sensation during urination;
- irritation or prickling in the urethra;
- discharge from the anus.

CAUTION

A PAP TEST (a cell sample from the cervix) completed during a routine gynecological exam will help in detecting cervical cancer. However, a PAP TEST will not indicate that you have chlamydia. You must be tested for this STD to be sure.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

In women, chlamydia can spread from the uterus to the Fallopian tubes, causing salpingitis. After contracting salpingitis, a woman may become sterile, have an ectopic pregnancy (outside of the uterus), or have chronic pain in the lower abdomen.

In men, infection can spread to the testicles. It may then cause pain in the genitals as well as problems during urination.

If a woman is infected during childbirth, the baby may develop conjunctivitis (an eye infection) or pneumonia during the weeks that follow birth.

CHLAMYDIA IS TREATABLE!

The physician will prescribe antibiotics that you and your partners can obtain **free of charge** in any pharmacy. It is very important to take all the prescribed medication. Your partners should also be examined and treated.

Depending on which antibiotic is prescribed, side effects may occur. If the side effects are severe, ask your pharmacist or your doctor for advice. Do not stop treatment without talking to a doctor.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

During the seven days following the treatment, it is advised to abstain from sexual contact since the disease will not have been completely cured. However, if you do have sex during this period, always use a condom. A condom also provides additional protection against an unwanted pregnancy in the rare instances in which an oral contraceptive is temporarily less effective due to interference from antibiotics.

If possible, your sexual partner should seek treatment at the same time as you, even if no symptoms are present. It is important to inform any sexual partners you had within the last sixty (60) days, since they may be infected and not know it.

A past history of chlamydia does not protect you from this STD. Therefore, it's possible to get chlamydia several times.

THE CONDOM... SOMETIMES OR EVERY TIME?

To diminish the risk of catching an STD, you should ALWAYS use a condom during sexual activity involving vaginal or anal intercourse. To be safer, you should also use a condom during oral penetration by the penis.

Couples that have been together for a long period of time, whose STD tests are negative, AND who do not have other sex partners can think about no longer using a condom.

Don't forget that contraceptive pills do not protect you against chlamydia or any other STD.

REMEMBER

- A person with chlamydia often has no symptoms.
- Do not hesitate to ask for a test to detect this STD.
- Prescribed medication to treat chlamydia is free for the infected person and his/her sexual partners.
- Sexual partners of infected people must be informed so they can be treated.
- A properly used condom is the best way to guard against chlamydia and other STDs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR CLSC.

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