

Chlamydia

PATIENT INFORMATION

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) that is easy to treat. It is quite easy to catch and can cause serious problems if you don't get it treated. It is very common in people aged less than 25.

How do I know if I have chlamydia?

Many people don't notice any symptoms. If they do, symptoms could be:

Females

- Sometimes there can be pain when urinating or low tummy pain, especially during sex.
- There can be unusual bleeding between periods or bleeding after sex.
- Sometimes chlamydia can cause an unusual discharge or bleeding from the anus if there has been anal sex.

Males

- Soreness, an unusual discharge or itching in the opening at the end of the penis (urethra). There can also be pain when urinating.
- Unusual discharge or bleeding from the anus if there has been any anal sex.
- Very occasionally there can be pain or swelling in the testicles.

How does someone get chlamydia?

By having sex or sexual contact with another person who has chlamydia. The other person may not know they have the infection. Types of sexual contact include vaginal and anal sex, and sometimes oral sex, sharing sex toys, or sex play. If you use condoms every time you have a sex you are much less likely to get chlamydia. Chlamydia can also be passed from mother to baby during birth and may result in an eye or lung infection in the baby.

How do I get checked for chlamydia?

You need to see your doctor or nurse or sexual health clinic for a check-up. Take along someone you trust if you want, for support.

- Females will need a swab from the vagina. If you don't have any symptoms you may be able to do the swab yourself. If you have symptoms you will need to be examined by a doctor or nurse in case there are other things causing your symptoms.
- Males need a urine test.
- If you have had anal sex or anal sex play you will need a swab from the anus (males and females)

It may be embarrassing, but it is better to get checked than to have untreated chlamydia.

How do I get treated?

You will need to take some tablets – usually a single dose of an antibiotic cures chlamydia. Sometimes tablets may need to be taken for 2 weeks if the infection is more serious.

Important advice

- Finish all the tablets you have been given, even if you feel better.
- You need to tell anyone you have had sex with within the last 2 months to get tested and treated for chlamydia.
- You should use condoms or avoid sex for 7 days after you have been treated, so you don't pass the infection on to someone else.
- You will also need to use condoms or avoid sex for 7 days after your partner(s) have been treated or you may get chlamydia back again.
- We recommend you have another sexual health check in 3 months in case you get chlamydia again.

Important information

- Chlamydia is a **common sexually transmitted infection (STI)** that is **easy to treat** with antibiotics.
- Many people with chlamydia **don't notice symptoms**.
- You get chlamydia by having sexual contact with another person who has chlamydia.
- **Testing:** Females will need a swab from the vagina; males need a urine test. Males and females will need an anal swab if you have had anal sex or anal sex play.
- **You need to tell** anyone you have had sex with within the last 2 months to get tested and treated for chlamydia.
- You should **use condoms** or avoid sex for 7 days after you have been treated so you don't pass the infection on to someone else.

This Patient Information Sheet has been produced by NZSHS. Every effort has been taken to ensure that the information in this Patient Information Sheet is correct at the time of publishing (July 2012).

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