

CHLAMYDIA

What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by the bacteria *Chlamydia Trachomatis*. When transmitted through sexual contact, the bacteria can infect the urinary and reproductive organs.

Symptoms of Chlamydia

Women:

No symptoms in 70-80% of cases.

- Abnormal vaginal discharge
- Burning sensation during urination
- Lower abdominal and/or lower back pain
- Nausea
- Fever
- Pain during intercourse
- Bleeding between menstrual periods

Men:

Like women, men who are infected may not show symptoms. Estimates of those with no symptoms range from 25% to 50% of infected men.

- Discharge from the penis
- Pain, burning during urination
- Burning and itching around the opening of the penis
- Tenderness or pain in the testicles.

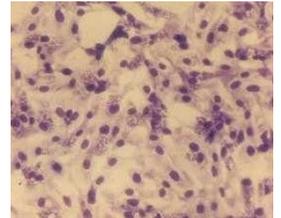
How Do People Get Chlamydia?

Chlamydia can be transmitted during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Chlamydia can also be passed from an infected mother to her baby during vaginal childbirth. Any sexually active person can be infected with Chlamydia. The greater the number of sex partners, the greater the risk of infection.

Because the cervix (opening to the uterus) of teenage girls and young women is not fully matured and is probably more susceptible to infection, they are at particularly high risk for infection if sexually active. Since Chlamydia can be transmitted by oral or anal sex, men who have sex with men are also at risk for Chlamydia infection.

Diagnosis, Treatment and Complications

There are laboratory tests to diagnose Chlamydia. If detected early on, Chlamydia can easily be treated with antibiotics and the symptoms alleviated within 7 to 10 days. But in many cases, it causes no symptoms, so people can be infected without even knowing it.



If Chlamydia infections go untreated, they can lead to more serious health problems, such as infertility. In women, untreated infection can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), which causes severe pelvic pain. These complications can appear months or even years after the person is infected. It's important to take the precautions to prevent Chlamydia, and if it's suspected, to seek treatment as soon as possible.

How Can I Help Prevent the Spread of Chlamydia?

The surest way to avoid transmission of STDs is to abstain from sexual contact, or to be in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who has been tested and is known to be uninfected.

Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, can reduce the risk of transmission of Chlamydia.

For more information, please contact a Public Health Nurse at the City-County Health Department at 454-6950 or visit www.cchdmt.org or www.cdc.gov