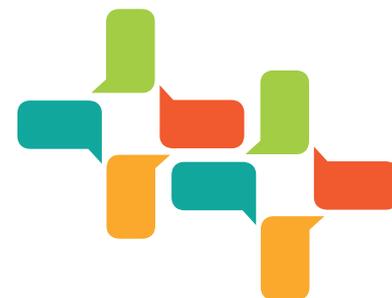


Fact Sheet

Gonorrhoea



What is gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is a sexually transmissible bacterial infection. It is less common in the general community than other sexually transmissible infections, such as chlamydia. Gonorrhoea can infect the throat, rectum, urethra (urine passage), cervix (neck of the womb) and eyes.

What are the symptoms?

Many women and some men may have no symptoms at all.

Men may experience

- pain when passing urine
- a discharge from the penis
- pain in the testes (balls)
- redness around the opening of the penis
- anal discharge or discomfort

Women may experience

- an unusual vaginal discharge
- pain when passing urine
- pelvic pain
- pain during sex
- irregular bleeding such as bleeding in between periods or bleeding after sex
- anal discharge or discomfort

If gonorrhoea has infected the throat there are generally few symptoms. Rarely gonorrhoea may cause some other symptoms such as joint pain and swelling, and conjunctivitis (eye inflammation). If gonorrhoea is not treated in women, it can spread to the uterus and fallopian tubes, causing pelvic inflammatory disease and problems with fertility.

How is it spread?

Gonorrhoea is spread by having unprotected sex with an infected person. This includes vaginal, anal and oral sex. You can reduce your risk of catching gonorrhoea by always using a condom when you have sex with a new partner. However you should not have sex with someone who has gonorrhoea, even using a condom, until after they have completed their course of treatment.

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How do you test for gonorrhoea?

Men can have a urine test (ideally having not passed urine for one hour before the test). They can also have swabs taken from the anus and/or throat and penis (if there is discharge present). Women can have a urine test or a swab taken from the vagina or cervix, anus and throat if appropriate (when there has been oral or anal sex). These tests are not painful.

What is the treatment?

Gonorrhoea is easily treated with an injection of an antibiotic called ceftriaxone. Your doctor may also recommend treatment for chlamydia at the same time, because if a person has gonorrhoea, it is common for them to have chlamydia as well. Chlamydia is treated with antibiotic tablets such as azithromycin. It is important to avoid having sex for a week after the treatment, so that you don't pass on the infection to someone else, or become infected again yourself. Sexual partners of the last two months should be contacted, and offered an STI check and treatment for gonorrhoea as well. This is known as 'contact tracing'. Your doctor or nurse can help you with this. It is recommended that you have another test for gonorrhoea three months later to make sure you haven't been reinfected.

Where can I go for advice/testing?

- A Family Planning clinic
- A sexual health clinic. To view a full listing of NSW Sexual Health Services, call the NSW Sexual Health Information Line on 1800 451 624, or visit www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/sexualhealth/sexual_phus.asp
- Your local doctor

For more information

- Contact the Family Planning NSW Talkline on 1300 658 886 or go to www.fpnsw.org.au/talkline
- NRS (for deaf) 133 677
- Or visit your nearest Family Planning clinic

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