

Gonorrhea

What is gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea (gon a REE a) is a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Anyone who is sexually active can get gonorrhea. It is more common among teens and young adults. Many people who have gonorrhea don't know it, especially because the disease often has no symptoms. You can pass gonorrhea to others without knowing it. Gonorrhea is easy to treat and cure. If you do not treat gonorrhea, it can lead to serious health problems.

How can I lower my risk of getting gonorrhea?

The surest way to prevent gonorrhea is not to have sex or to have sex only with someone who's not infected and who has sex only with you. Condoms can reduce your risk of getting gonorrhea if used the right way every single time you have sex. Washing the genitals, urinating, or douching after sex will not prevent any STD.

How is gonorrhea spread?

You can get gonorrhea by having sex with someone who has it. "Having sex" means having anal, oral, or vaginal contact. If you are a pregnant woman who has gonorrhea, you can pass the infection to your baby.

What are the symptoms of gonorrhea?

You can get gonorrhea in the anus, eyes, mouth, throat, urinary tract, or uterus. You may not notice any symptoms. If you do have symptoms, they will vary depending on what part of your body is infected. If you have gonorrhea in the uterus or urinary tract, you might notice these symptoms:

- Vaginal bleeding between your periods or with sex.
- Pain or burning when you pass urine.
- Increased vaginal discharge.
- Fever
- Severe cramps
- Pain with sex

When should I be tested for gonorrhea?

You should be tested if you have:

- Any symptoms, like pain or burning when you pass urine or vaginal discharge.
- A partner who has gonorrhea or symptoms that might be gonorrhea.
- Another STD, such as Chlamydia.
- Anytime you have a new sexual partner, it is wise to be tested for STDs.

How is gonorrhea treated?

Gonorrhea can be treated and cured with antibiotics. Finish all of the medicine to be sure you are cured. Don't share your medicine with anyone. If you still have symptoms after treatment, go back to see your doctor.

Test of Cure

Your provider may recommend you return to the clinic for a second gonorrhea test approximately 4 weeks after you are treated for gonorrhea. This is to ensure that the infection was completely treated.

If I have gonorrhea, what does that mean for my partner?

Your partner may have gonorrhea too. Be sure to tell your recent sex partners, so they can get tested and treated. Avoid having sex until you've both finished treatment, so you don't re-infect each other.

What happens if I don't get treated?

Gonorrhea stays in your body if it is not treated. It can spread to the uterus or fallopian tubes and cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can cause damage that makes you unable to get pregnant. Untreated gonorrhea can cause chronic pain in your pelvic area. If you have untreated gonorrhea, you could pass the infection to your baby when giving birth. Gonorrhea can cause serious health problems for babies.