

CHLAMYDIA 101

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common, curable sexually transmitted infection (STI). In the United States, chlamydia is the most common bacterial STI, particularly among sexually active adolescents and young adults. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that there are almost 3 million cases of chlamydia each year.



What are the symptoms of chlamydia?

Most people with chlamydia will have no symptoms at all. If a person does have symptoms, they usually develop within one to three weeks after exposure to chlamydia. Women may experience vaginal discharge, or a burning sensation during urination. For men, symptoms may include pus discharge from the penis, pain during urination, or pain or swelling of the testicles.



How do you get chlamydia?

Chlamydia, like other sexually transmitted infections, is passed from an infected person to a partner through certain sexual activities. Chlamydia is passed primarily during anal or vaginal sex. It can also be passed on through oral sex, but that is less likely. Chlamydia can be passed even if the penis or tongue does not go all the way into the vagina or anus. If the vagina, cervix, anus, penis or mouth come in contact with infected secretions or fluids, then transmission is possible.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend sexually active women age 25 or younger get tested once per year.

Who should get tested for chlamydia?

Because chlamydia is very common and often has no symptoms, people who have had sex should think about being tested. CDC recommends sexually active women age 25 or younger get tested once per year. It is also recommended for women with new or multiple sexual partners and pregnant women. But both men and women both should talk with a healthcare provider about whether they need testing for chlamydia or other STIs. Chlamydia can easily be treated with antibiotics.



Is chlamydia dangerous?

Chlamydia can be treated and cured easily, but if not detected and left untreated, it can cause serious problems, especially in women. Chlamydia is the leading preventable cause of infertility and can also cause infections in newborn babies of infected mothers.



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