

Department of Genitourinary Medicine

Chlamydia

What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a 'germ' or bacterium which infects the genital tract and, occasionally, the eye. Genital chlamydia infection is transmitted through sexual intercourse.

Would I know if I had a chlamydia infection?

Not always - chlamydia is **often** carried by men and women **without** symptoms. If symptoms do occur they usually take two to three weeks to show after acquiring the infection.

The symptoms are:

Men

- Chlamydia infects the 'water passage' (urethra) and causes an inflammation (urethritis). This may produce a stinging sensation on passing urine or a seepage or discharge from the urethra. This is often indistinguishable from the other common cause of urethritis, which is gonorrhoea.
- Occasionally, chlamydia spreads from the urethra to the tube which carries sperm from the testis (spermatic duct or epididymis) and produces pain and swelling in the testes.

Women

- Chlamydia most commonly infects the cervix ('neck of the womb') and may produce a slightly excessive discharge.
- Chlamydia may also infect the 'water passage' (urethra) and cause a stinging sensation on passing urine. This feels exactly like cystitis (a bladder infection) and can only be distinguished by a urine test.

- Occasionally, chlamydia may spread from the cervix to the uterus ('womb') and fallopian tubes. This usually produces pain low in the abdomen.
- A pregnant woman infected with chlamydia may pass the infection on to her baby during birth causing a lung or eye infection. Fortunately, chlamydia can be easily treated during pregnancy without ill effect on the baby.

Can chlamydia be easily treated?

Yes, with an antibiotic - usually azithromycin, doxycycline or erythromycin. It is important not to resume sexual contact until treatment has been completed and your partner has also received treatment.

Do I need to inform my sexual partner if I have chlamydia?

Most definitely, **yes**. Recent sexual partners should attend a Genitourinary Medicine or Sexual Health Clinic for a check-up. Failure to do so may lead to complications.

Remember, chlamydia is often carried without symptoms.

How can I protect myself from chlamydia infection?

Avoiding sexual intercourse is extremely effective but not very practical. Using condoms is a good protection, not only against chlamydia but against other sexually acquired infections. For full protection condoms must be used consistently and correctly. A surprisingly large number of people do not use condoms correctly. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to ask the clinic nurse or doctor or pick up one of our explanatory leaflets in the waiting room, such as the Family Planning Association leaflet titled 'Chlamydia'.

If you have any further questions, please contact clinic 1a on telephone number **01223 217774**.

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Potete chiedere di ottenere queste informazioni in altre lingue, in stampato grande o in audiocassetta.

Italian

若你需要本信息的繁體中文、大字體或音訊格式的版本，請要求索取。

Cantonese

તમને આ માહિતી બીજી ભાષાઓમાં, મોટા અક્ષરોમાં અથવા સાંભળી શકાય એવા માધ્યમ (ઓડીઓ ફોર્મેટ)માં જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો.

Gujarati

تکایه پرسبار بکه نه گهر نهوزانیاریهت دهوی به زمانیکی تر . به پیتی گهوره یانیش به شیوهی دهنگ

Kurdish

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں میں، بڑے الفاظ کی اشاعت میں یا آڈیو ٹیپ پر درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس کیلئے درخواست کریں۔

Urdu



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For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

Document history

Authors	Dr Chris Sonnex
Department	Department of GU Medicine, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 2QQ www.addenbrookes.org.uk
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