

Chlamydia

What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that is caused by *Chlamydia trachomatis*, a bacterium that can damage reproductive organs.

How do you get Chlamydia?

Chlamydia can be transmitted during vagina, anal, or oral sex with someone that has chlamydia. It can also be passed from a mother to her newborn baby during childbirth.

What are the symptoms of Chlamydia?

For **women**, symptoms can include:

- abnormal vaginal or rectal (if you have anal sex) discharge
- burning sensation when urinating
- abdominal or low back pain
- nausea
- fever
- pain during sexual intercourse
- bleeding between menstrual cycles

For **men**, symptoms can include:

- discharge from the penis
- burning sensation around the opening of the penis when urinating
- pain and/or swelling in the testicles

How can Chlamydia be prevented?

Abstinence is the only 100% full-proof method of not contracting Chlamydia or be in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship. However, latex male condoms, when used consistently and correctly, can reduce the risk of transmission of chlamydia.

What happens if I don't get treated?

If you are a **Woman**:

Chlamydia stays in your body if it is not treated. It can spread into the uterus or fallopian tubes and cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a serious infection of the reproductive organs. PID can also cause damage that makes you unable to get pregnant. If you have untreated chlamydia, you have a higher chance of getting HIV if you have unprotected sex with an HIV-infected partner.

If you are a **Man**:

Chlamydia rarely causes long-term health problems in men. You may get an infection in the tube that carries sperm from the testes. This infection can cause pain and fever. In rare cases, this infection may prevent you from fathering children.

Where can I get more information?

Oklahoma State Department of Health
HIV/STD Service
1000 N.E. Tenth, Room 614
Oklahoma City, OK 73117-1299
Phone: (405)-271-4636
Fax: (405)-271-5149
www.health.ok.gov

Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/std

Your sexual partner(s) should be tested for chlamydia even if they have no symptoms. If you have been diagnosed with chlamydia, you should have a blood test in three months to detect blood-borne infections you might have contracted at the time you had chlamydia.

When will the symptoms appear?

Chlamydia is known as the 'silent disease' because, often, there are no symptoms. However, symptoms can develop anywhere from a few months to a few years after becoming infected.

How is Chlamydia diagnosed?

Chlamydia can be diagnosed with simple laboratory tests. Some can be performed on urine, and others require a specimen to be collected from the penis or the cervix.

How is Chlamydia treated?

Chlamydia can be treated and cured with antibiotics. A single dose of azithromycin or a week of doxycycline (twice daily) are the most commonly used treatments. There is no difference in treatment if you are HIV-positive.

How common is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia rates in African Americans are nearly 7 times higher than Whites (1,439 per 100,000 compared to 197 per 100,000). American Indians was 2.4 times higher than the White population.

In 2007, there were 12,529 reported cases of chlamydia in Oklahoma. Nearly 91% of those cases were between the ages of 15 and 29, with 55% between 20 and 29.



Oklahoma State
Department of Health
Creating a State of Health

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Facts & Information