

Gonorrhea

What is Gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) that is caused by *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, a bacterium that can damage reproductive organs.

How do you get Gonorrhea?

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

What are the symptoms of Gonorrhea?

Men and women can have any of the following:

- Thick yellow, gray, or green discharge from the vagina or penis.
- Burning or pain when urinating or having a bowel movement.
- Need to urinate more often.

For **Women**, symptoms can include:

- Abnormal periods or bleeding between periods.
- Cramps and pain in the lower abdomen (belly).

For **Men**:

- Swollen or tender testicles.

How can Gonorrhea be prevented?

Abstinence is the only 100% full-proof method of not contracting Gonorrhea 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 Gonorrhea.

What happens if I don't get treated?

Gonorrhea stays in your body if it is not treated. You may have a higher risk of getting HIV infection if you have unprotected sex with a partner living with HIV. Gonorrhea can also spread to the blood or joints. This condition can be very serious.

If you are a **Woman**:

Gonorrhea 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. Untreated gonorrhea may cause chronic pain in your pelvic area or you could pass the infection to your baby. Gonorrhea can cause serious health problems for babies.

If you are a **Man**:

You may develop a painful condition in the testicles. In rare cases, this 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

CDC-INFO Contact Center
1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
Email: cdcinfo@cdc.gov

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

When will the symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually appear within 2 to 21 days after contact

How is Gonorrhea diagnosed?

Gonorrhea 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 Gonorrhea treated?

Several antibiotics can successfully cure gonorrhea in adolescents and adults. However, drug-resistant strains of gonorrhea are increasing in the United States, and successful treatment of gonorrhea is becoming more difficult. Because many people with gonorrhea also have chlamydia, antibiotics for both infections are usually given together. Persons with gonorrhea should be tested for other STDs.

How common is Gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a very common infectious disease. In 2006, 358,366 cases of gonorrhea were reported to CDC. In 2007, there were 4,827 reported cases of Gonorrhea in Oklahoma. Nearly 81% of those cases were between the ages of 15 and 29, with 55% between 20 and 29. Those aged 15 to 19 and 20 to 24 had rates of infection 4 to 5 times higher than the overall state rate.



Oklahoma State
Department of Health
Creating a State of Health

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Facts & Information