

Chlamydia

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia (kluh-MID-ee-uh) is the most common sexually transmitted infection, or STI. It can affect the penis, vagina, or rectal area.

Who gets it?

Anyone who has sex with a person who has chlamydia can get it. It can spread through oral, vaginal, or anal sex. You are more likely to get it if you have sex without a condom or have more than one sex partner. Babies can get it during birth.

How do I know if I have it?

You might have burning when you pee. You could have discharge from your penis, vagina, or rectum. You may see blood when you poop. Sometimes people have pain during sex or pain in their pelvis, testicles, or rectum. If you notice symptoms, please see your doctor.

Testing is the best way to know for sure if you have chlamydia. You or your doctor will collect a sample of your urine or a swab from your throat, vagina, cervix, penis, or rectum.

People with a cervix who are younger than 25 years or older people with a cervix who have a new sex partner or multiple sex partners should be tested every year. Men who have sex with men should be tested at least once a year and may need testing more often.

How can I lower my risk of getting it?

Not having sex is the best way to avoid chlamydia and other STIs. If you have sex, use condoms to lower your risk. You should get tested if you have had sex without a condom. If you have an STI, don't have sex until you and your partner have been treated. You can get it again if your partner is not treated.

How is it treated?

Chlamydia is easy to treat with oral antibiotics. It rarely causes a serious infection, but if left untreated it could become severe and you may need to stay in the hospital and get medicine delivered through a needle in your arm. Sometimes people who have chlamydia will have another STI. You should also be tested for gonorrhea, syphilis, and HIV.

Where can I get more information?

AAFP's Patient Information Resource

<https://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/diseases-conditions/sexually-transmitted-infections.html>

American Sexual Health Association

<https://www.ashsexualhealth.org/chlamydia-101/>

U.S. National Library of Medicine's Medline Plus

<https://medlineplus.gov/chlamydiainfections.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/std/chlamydia/default.htm>

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