

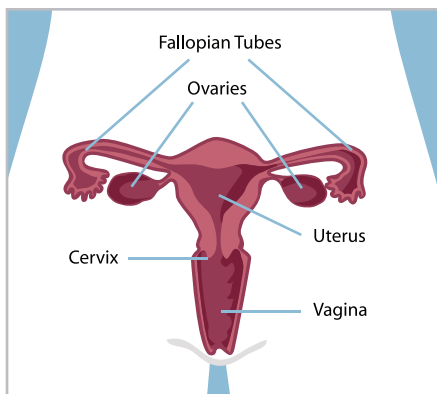
HealthyActions

Achieving Your Goals for Healthy Living



Chlamydia “The Silent Killer”

Chlamydia (klah-MIH-dee-ah) is a disease that is passed on through sex. It is an infection. Most people who have it don't know they have it.



Q: What are the symptoms of chlamydia?

A: Usually chlamydia has no symptoms. It is known as a “silent” disease.¹ Women who do have symptoms might notice^{1,2}:

- Abnormal vaginal discharge or a yellowish discharge with a foul odor
- Burning or pain when passing urine
- Urge to pass urine more than usual
- Lower back pain or pain in the abdomen
- Nausea
- Fever
- Pain during intercourse (sex)
- Bleeding between periods

Q: Is chlamydia dangerous?

A: Yes, it is a serious disease. It begins in a woman's cervix. It can spread to the ovaries or fallopian (fuh-LO-pee-uhn) tubes (the tubes that carry eggs from a woman's ovaries to her uterus). If not treated, chlamydia can cause pelvic inflammatory (in-FLAM-uh-toe-ree) disease (PID).² PID can cause damage that leaves a woman unable to get pregnant or have trouble while pregnant. Chlamydia can be passed to your baby at birth. It can cause eye infections or lung problems.¹

Q: How is chlamydia spread?

A: Chlamydia is passed from one person to another through sex. It can also be passed from an infected mother to her baby during childbirth.²

Q: How can I protect myself from getting chlamydia?

A: You can protect yourself by:

- Being in a relationship with just one partner
- Being tested for chlamydia
- Having your partner tested for chlamydia (especially if a new partner)
- Using a female or latex condom during sex^{1,3}



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Q: Are there certain groups of women who are at higher risk for getting chlamydia?

A: Yes:

- Sexually active women who don't use female or latex condoms
- Women who have many sex partners
- Women who have a sex partner who has many partners
- Young women under 25¹
- Women with a history of other sexually transmitted diseases

Q: Should I be tested for chlamydia?

A: If you are a sexually active woman who is 25 years old or younger, you should be tested every year for chlamydia. Older women who have a new sex partner or more than one sex partner should also be tested every year. All pregnant women should be tested.²

Also, no matter what your age, if you experience any symptoms of chlamydia, you should get tested.

Q: How does the doctor test for chlamydia?

A: Lab tests are done on urine or on cells taken from the cervix in an exam.²

Q: Can chlamydia be cured?

A: Yes. It can be treated with antibiotics. It is important that all sex partners be tested, treated, and re-tested before having sex—otherwise partners can be re-infected.^{1,2}

Do all that you can to protect yourself against chlamydia. See your doctor if you have symptoms of chlamydia. Follow your doctor's advice if you have chlamydia.

References

1. Planned Parenthood: Chlamydia. Available at: <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/sexual-health/std/chlamydia.htm>
2. CDC. Chlamydia Fact Sheet. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/std/Chlamydia/chlamydia.pdf>
3. Planned Parenthood: Female Condom. Available at: <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/birth-control-pregnancy/birth-control/female-condom.htm>

