

Chlamydia

What is chlamydia?

- Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis*.
- Most cases occur in people between 15 to 24 years of age.

How is chlamydia spread?

- Chlamydia is spread through unprotected vaginal, oral, or anal sex with an infected person.
- A pregnant woman with chlamydia can pass the infection to the baby during pregnancy or childbirth.

What are the signs and symptoms of chlamydia?

- Most individuals who are infected with chlamydia do not know it because they don't have symptoms.
- Males who have symptoms may have pain or burning on urination with clear to milky discharge from the penis.
- Females who have symptoms may have unusual or increased vaginal discharge, pain during sex, pain or burning when peeing or pelvic pain.
- Females may have spotting between periods or after sex.
- Symptoms of rectal infections may include rectal pain, discharge, or bleeding.
- Symptoms may appear 1-3 weeks (or up to 6 weeks) after exposure.

What are the long-term problems if chlamydia is not treated?

- In women, the reproductive body parts (fallopian tubes and ovaries) may become infected, which may lead to chronic pelvic pain, tubal pregnancy, or infertility (not being able to have a baby)
- Men can have swelling of the urethra and testicles, which can cause infertility.
- People with chlamydia can get human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) more easily.

How is chlamydia diagnosed?

- Most often, a urine sample is sent for testing.
- Regular testing is recommended for:
 - Sexually active youth <25 years of age with multiple partners
 - Sexual contact with a person who has Chlamydia
 - Those with a new sexual partner
 - Those with more than 2 partners in the past year
 - Those who have had a previous STI
 - Street-involved youth
 - Sex workers and their sexual partners
 - Injection drug users
- Talk to your public health nurse, nurse practitioner, or doctor about your risk for sexually transmitted infections (including HIV) and how to get tested.

How is chlamydia treated?

- Chlamydia can be treated easily with antibiotics.
- The antibiotic treatment usually consists of a one-time dose of azithromycin or a week of doxycycline.
- Pregnant women may need different antibiotics.
- You can get the antibiotics **free of charge** from a nurse, nurse practitioner, doctor or an STI clinic.
- Your sexual partner(s) must be tested and treated.
- You and your partner must abstain from unprotected sex for a week after both of you have started antibiotic treatment or you will get the infection again. (Follow directions on the medication package).

What will decrease the risk of getting chlamydia?

- The surest way to prevent all STIs is to abstain from any sexual contact or to have sex with one partner who has been tested for STIs and is not infected (mutually monogamous).
- Use condoms each time you have sex (including oral, anal and vaginal sex).
- Limit the number of sexual partners you have.

For more information contact your local public health office, your physician, nurse practitioner, HealthLine at 811. OR the following sexual health clinics:

Saskatoon Sexual Health Program
#100 – 310 Idylwyld Drive North
SASKATOON, SK S7L 0Z2
To speak with a nurse Mon-Fri, 9-12 pm
Phone: 306-655-4642

Regina STD Clinic
2110 Hamilton Street
REGINA, SK S4P 2E3
Phone: 306-766-7788

Prince Albert Parkland Sexual Health Clinic
101 15th Street East
PRINCE ALBERT, SK S6V 1G1
Phone: 306-765-6540

Battlefords Sexual Health Clinic
Rm. 104, 1192 – 101 Street
NORTH BATTLEFORD, SK S9A 0Z6
Phone: 306-937-6846

Meadow Lake Sexual Health Services
218 Centre St.
MEADOW LAKE, SK S9X 1L6
Phone: 306-236-5661

References: Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections, Chlamydia (2010); Chlamydia, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services (2014); Control of Communicable Diseases Manual (2008); Red Book (2012); British Columbia Center for Disease Control (2014)