



GONORRHOEA

What is Gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is a bacterial Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) of the genitals, rectum or throat.

What are the signs and symptoms of gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea may cause:

- Vaginal discharge or pelvic pain in women.
- Anal discharge.

When the urethra is infected men may have:

- A discharge from the end of the penis.
- Irritation of the urethra.
- Pain when urinating.

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Symptoms usually occur within 2-10 days after contact with an infected partner.

Men have symptoms more often than women.

Can gonorrhoea be cured?

Yes. In most cases a single dose of antibiotics quickly cures gonorrhoea. More severe cases may need more antibiotics.

- Always finish all the antibiotics, because while the symptoms may disappear in a few days, the bacteria may not have been killed off.
- It is best to avoid having sex during treatment because you can still give the infection to someone else.
- If you do have sex, you must use a condom for vaginal or anal sex and oral dam for oral sex.
- Your doctor will want to see you again when you have completed the treatment.

What happens at the test for gonorrhoea?

The doctor will talk to you and examine you.

If you have gonorrhoea you should also be checked for other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

Tests for gonorrhoea include:

- A swab from the infected area.
- Women will have an internal examination.

What happens if gonorrhoea is not treated?

In women, gonorrhoea can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) if not treated. This is when the reproductive organs, the uterus (womb) and fallopian tubes in the pelvis become inflamed. PID may also include:

- An ectopic pregnancy when the foetus grows in the fallopian tubes instead of the uterus.
- Infertility from the fallopian tubes becoming damaged by scar tissue.
- Chronic pain in the pelvis.

In men, if not treated, gonorrhoea can cause:

- Inflammation of the tissues which join the testicles to the spermatic cords (the epididymis).
- Chronic inflammation in the urethra.
- Chronic discomfort in the testicles.
- Infertility, but this is not common.

Gonorrhoea can trigger chronic arthritis, but this is rare.

Should I tell my sexual partner(s) that I am being treated for gonorrhoea?

Yes, if you have had vaginal, oral or anal sex without a condom your partner(s) will also need treatment.

Any sexual partners should be treated even if they have no symptoms or their test results are normal.

If you need help to tell your partner(s) speak to a doctor, nurse or sexual health counsellor.