

CLASS

Chlamydia Screening Study

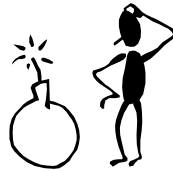
Chlamydia Fact Sheet

Chlamydia, what is it and why is it important?

What is Chlamydia?



Chlamydia is a common sexually transmissible bacteria that infects the cervix (neck of womb) and urethra (waterpipe) in women, and the urethra in men. It can go undetected for months or years.



Why is it important?

You can infect your partner. The most serious complication is in women who might get an infection in the womb - pelvic inflammatory disease which could make them infertile. Research shows that this can happen in 1 in 5 women following a single case of pelvic inflammatory disease. In men it can cause pain and swelling of the testicles.



Any other problems with Chlamydia infection?

Yes, pelvic inflammatory disease can last a long time (sometimes months) and is often painful. It can also damage the fallopian tubes (the tubes that connect a woman's ovaries with her womb) causing a fertilised egg to get stuck and resulting in an ectopic pregnancy. This is an uncommon but very serious problem for women. It can also lead to arthritis in the joints but this is also uncommon.



How do you catch it?

Chlamydia is usually sexually transmitted. You can catch it by:

- having sex with someone who has Chlamydia.
- a mother passing it to her baby at birth
- passing the infection on fingers from the genitals to the eyes (this is rare).

- Chlamydia can also sometimes be carried in the throat. We do not know how often it is transmitted this way.

Remember a person may be carrying it for a long time without knowing they have the infection.

How do you prevent it?

Using condoms during sex can reduce the risk of getting or passing on Chlamydia or other sexually shared/transmitted infections.



How common is it?

It is extremely common and on the increase. We believe that between 1 in 10 and 1 in 100 people are infected, but we are trying to find out exactly how many. It is more common in people under 25.



How would you know if you had it?

Most people with Chlamydia will not have any symptoms. There are usually no signs to tell you that you

have the infection, so it can stay hidden for many years.

However people who do have symptoms may have any of those listed below:

In women

- An unusual or unpleasant vaginal discharge
- The need to pass urine more often
- Pain on passing urine or during sex
- Pain in the pelvis or lower abdomen
- Bleeding between periods or after sex

In men

- A discharge from the penis
- Pain and/or burning when passing water
- Irritation at the tip of the penis.

Can Chlamydia be cured?

Yes, very easily, with a short course of antibiotics.



What do I do if my partner or I have symptoms and are infected?

This study will test you for Chlamydia, and if positive you will receive the

correct treatment. However if you or your partner are concerned about your symptoms you can seek help from a genitourinary clinic as soon as possible or your own general practitioner may be able to help. You should inform them that you have been approached as part of the CLaSS study.

What if you have Chlamydia?

You will be offered treatment with antibiotics. It is important that if you have been told you have Chlamydia to tell your partner(s), as they should have treatment. You will be given advice and help on how to do this. If untreated, and you resume penetrative sex [when the penis enters the vagina, mouth or anus] with your partner, you would become re-infected and have to be treated again! If you are starting a new relationship, you should not have penetrative sex until a week after you have been given your course of special antibiotics.

If you need any further information, please contact:

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