

CLASS

Chlamydia Screening Study

Chlamydia Screening Study 1

We are inviting you to take part in a research study funded by the National Health Service. This leaflet explains why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information, which will help you decide whether or not you wish to take part. Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear.

Why are we doing this study?

Chlamydia is an infection that is passed from person to person, usually through sexual intercourse, and can be cured with antibiotics. Because Chlamydia usually causes no symptoms and can stay in the body for a long time most people with the infection do not know that they have it and would not know when they caught it. Both men and women can become infected. Untreated Chlamydia in women can cause infertility so it is important to identify and treat people with the infection and their sexual partners. The National Health Service is funding this research to find out how common Chlamydia is and to help decide whether or not a national screening programme is needed to reduce the problems caused by Chlamydia in this country.

Why have I been chosen?

To find out how common Chlamydia is we need information from a sample of people who represent the whole population. The best way to do this is by selecting people at random, that is, everyone has the same chance of being included in the study. Altogether, 18,000 people aged 16 to 39 years in Bristol and West Midlands have been randomly chosen. Your GP is part of this study and your name has been selected.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you will be asked

to sign a consent form. You are still free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and this will not affect the standard of care you receive.

We need as many people as possible to agree to take part so that the results of the research can be used with confidence.

What will happen if I take part?

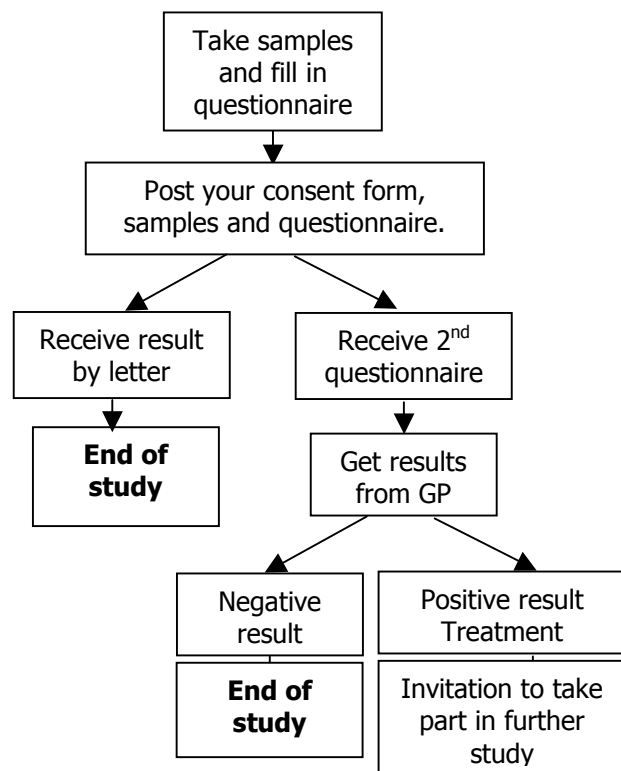
If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to provide a specimen of urine and a swab taken from just inside your vagina that will be tested for Chlamydia, and to fill in a questionnaire that takes no more than five minutes to complete. The samples and questionnaire can be posted in the Freepost envelope provided. The flow chart (on the next page) shows you what will happen if you take part.

Some people, when first approached, feel a little reluctant about taking part but we know from experience of a national survey of sexual attitudes and lifestyles that almost everyone is able to provide a urine and vaginal specimen with little or no embarrassment.

We will let most people know the results of the test for Chlamydia by letter and they will not need to do anything further. We will ask a small proportion, fewer than 1 in 10 of all those taking part, to fill in a more detailed questionnaire that we will send to you at home. The questionnaire takes less than half an hour to complete and asks about your social background, physical symptoms, contraception and some more personal questions about sexual relationships.

Your answers to this questionnaire will be handled completely confidentially.

Flow chart



People taking part in the second more detailed questionnaire survey will be asked to go to their GP surgery to get their test result. This group will include people with positive results and some with negative results so if you are asked to get your result from the surgery it does not necessarily mean that you have Chlamydia. We

will reimburse you for any travel that you have to do as part of the study.

People with positive Chlamydia results will be asked to take part in a further study that aims to find out the best way to manage Chlamydia infections.

What are the benefits of taking part?

Having a test for Chlamydia will tell you whether or not you have the infection now. If the test is positive then you will be given free treatment that will cure the Chlamydia infection and may prevent long-term problems. We hope that you will agree to take part. Even if your test is negative you will be providing information that will be of national importance in helping to manage people with Chlamydia better in the future

What are the disadvantages of taking part?

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection and getting a positive result may be upsetting to you. We advise you to consider carefully how you would feel about this before agreeing to take part. Sometimes there are consequences for sexual relationship(s) now or in the past but we will ensure that you receive all the advice and treatment that you need.

Confidentiality

All information collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Your name and your address will

be removed from any information outside your GP surgery. You will not be identifiable in any published report from the study. Ethical approval for this study has been obtained from 'South and West Multicentre Research Ethics Committee'

Contact details

If you need any further information, or if you have difficulty posting your pack and you would like to arrange for your samples, consent form and questionnaire to be collected please contact:

Anne McCarthy, Project Manager, Department of Social Medicine, University of Bristol, Canynge Hall, Whiteladies Rd., Bristol.

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or Dr. Aisha Holloway, Assistant Project Manager, Department of Primary and General Practice, The Medical School, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

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