

Gonorrhoea

Gonorrhoea is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a bacteria (*Neisseria gonorrhoeae*).

How do I get gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is passed between people through unprotected sexual contact (oral, vaginal, or anal sex without a condom). You can infect others right after you come in contact with gonorrhoea. You can spread it to others without knowing it.

How do I prevent gonorrhoea?

When you're sexually active, the best way to prevent gonorrhoea is to use condoms for oral, vaginal, and anal sex.

Don't have any sexual contact if you or your partner(s) have symptoms of an STI, or may have been exposed to an STI. See a doctor or go to an STI Clinic for testing.

Get STI testing every 3 to 6 months and when you have symptoms.

How do I know if I have gonorrhoea?

Up to 40% of females and some males with gonorrhoea don't have symptoms. The infection can be in the rectum, penis, cervix, throat, and the eye. If you have gonorrhoea, you may have:

- pain or burning when you pee
- swelling, itching, or pain in the genital area
- discharge, bleeding, or itching from the bum
- redness and/or discharge from one or both eyes

Other symptoms in **females** include:

- unusual vaginal discharge
- irregular bleeding (often after sex)
- pain in the lower abdomen or pain during sex

Other symptoms in **males** include:

- green or yellow discharge from the penis
- irritation or itching inside the penis
- painful or swollen testicles

The best way to find out if you have gonorrhoea is to get tested. Your nurse or doctor can test you by taking a swab and/or doing a urine test.

Is gonorrhea harmful?

If not treated, gonorrhea can cause **serious** long-term effects including infertility and arthritis.

Other effects in females include pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and a higher risk of having a tubal pregnancy. Other effects in males include pain/swelling in the testicles (epididymo-orchitis) and urinary tract problems.

These effects can be prevented if you get **early STI testing and treatment**.

What if I'm pregnant?

If not treated, gonorrhea can cause early delivery or rupture of membranes. If a pregnant female isn't treated and has a vaginal delivery, it can cause serious eye, blood, and joint infections for the baby. Get tested and treated **before** delivery to prevent problems.

How is gonorrhea treated?

Gonorrhea is treated with antibiotics. Your partner(s) needs to be tested and treated, even if there are no symptoms. You can get re-infected if you have unprotected sex with someone before he or she is treated.

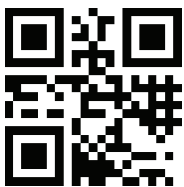
When can I have sex again?

It will take 1 week for the antibiotic to get rid of the infection. Don't have unprotected sex (oral, vaginal, or anal sex without a condom) for **7 days** after you and your partner(s) have been treated. The best protection is **not** to have sex (oral, vaginal, or anal) for at least 7 days.

If you still have symptoms, don't have any sexual contact.

For More Information

- STI/HIV Information Line: 1-800-772-2437
- www.myhealth.alberta.ca
- www.sexgerms.com



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