

# Chlamydia and Gonorrhea



## Common and curable

### Chlamydia and Gonorrhea Have Many Things in Common

Chlamydia and gonorrhea are both very common sexually transmitted infections (STIs). They have many things in common:

- **Anyone who is sexually active** can get chlamydia or gonorrhea through oral, anal, or vaginal sex.
- Chlamydia and gonorrhea are most common in young people, aged 15–24.
- Both STIs can cause genital infections, but they can cause anal and throat infections as well.
- No matter where someone is infected with chlamydia or gonorrhea, **it is likely they will have no symptoms**. Most women will have no symptoms at all with either STI. Some men may have symptoms, but not all.
- Both STIs can be especially harmful to a person with a uterus. Left untreated, chlamydia and gonorrhea can spread to the fallopian tubes. This can cause a condition called **pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)**. PID can scar the tubes and prevent future pregnancy. It can also lead to a life-threatening pregnancy outside the uterus (called an ectopic pregnancy).
- Untreated chlamydia and gonorrhea can also be harmful in a person with a penis. It can cause swelling in a tube in the testicles, a painful condition called epididymitis.
- Both chlamydia and gonorrhea can be passed from a pregnant person to their baby during childbirth. These infections can cause **health problems in the newborn**.

### Testing is Important!

Chlamydia and gonorrhea can be treated and cured. But most people have no symptoms and don't know they have it. **Testing is the only way to know**. Anyone who is sexually active should consider testing. Talk to your health care provider about your sexual history and ask if you should be tested.

**Testing can be quick and easy**. One kind of test uses a sample of urine. Other tests use a swab to collect a small amount of fluid from a penis, cervix, or vagina.

### These STIs are Curable

Because someone can be infected with both gonorrhea and chlamydia and the symptoms are so similar, health care providers will sometimes go ahead and treat people for both infections. Remember, **partners should be examined for infection and treated as well** to avoid reinfection.

Gonorrhea is curable, but it has become more difficult to treat in recent years. The bacteria that causes gonorrhea has steadily become resistant to most existing medications. This leaves health care providers with fewer options for treatment.

### Staying Healthy

You can protect yourself from chlamydia and gonorrhea in the same ways you protect yourself from other STIs. **Talk to your partner** about safer sex and how you can protect yourselves against STIs. **Have condoms on hand**, and be ready to use them. And **get tested**—and bring your partner with you to get tested too.