

# Chlamydia Fact Sheet for Patients & Partners



## THE FACTS

Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI) in Australia, particularly among sexually active young people aged between 15 and 25 years. If left untreated, Chlamydia can lead to serious long-term complications and infertility.

## TRANSMISSION

Chlamydia can be passed on by unprotected vaginal, oral or anal sex. Condoms are effective in preventing transmission if used properly and consistently.

## SYMPTOMS

Most people with Chlamydia feel well and have no symptoms at all. Others may experience:

- Burning or pain when passing urine
- Unusual discharge from the penis or vagina
- Pain during sex
- Unusual bleeding/spotting between periods
- Irritation or soreness at the tip of the penis.

## TESTING

Testing for Chlamydia is easy and painless. Your doctor will either test a swab (which you can do yourself if you prefer) or a urine sample. It is also a good idea to have tests for other STIs at the same time.

## TREATMENT

Chlamydia is **easily treated** with a single dose of antibiotics. It is important for both yourself and your partner to get treated at the same time to prevent the risk of reinfection. Do not have sex until you and your partner have both

been treated and then wait for at least one week after treatment. It is important to be re-tested for Chlamydia three months after treatment to ensure that you have not been reinfected.

## POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS OF UNTREATED CHLAMYDIA

In women:

- The infection can spread from the cervix to the uterus (womb) and the fallopian tubes; this is called Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)
- PID can scar or even block the fallopian tubes (which carry eggs to the womb) causing fertility problems
- PID can also prevent a fertilised egg from getting into the uterus, causing an ectopic pregnancy (when the egg grows in the fallopian tubes), which requires emergency surgery and can be fatal.

In men:

- Prostatitis (infection and swelling of the prostate gland)
- Epididymo-orchitis (infection and swelling in the scrotum and testicles)
- Infertility.

## PARTNER NOTIFICATION

If you tested positive for Chlamydia, it is likely that your recent sexual partners are also infected. It is very important for you to encourage your partner/s to be tested and treated. A copy of this fact sheet can be made available to them. However, if you prefer your partner/s be notified anonymously, please see your GP or visit [www.couldihaveit.com](http://www.couldihaveit.com)

## PREVENTION

**Remember!** Wearing a condom every time you have sex significantly reduces the risk of getting Chlamydia and other sexually transmitted infections. To be fully effective, condoms must be used consistently right from the start and throughout all sexual activity, including vaginal, oral and anal sex. You should also have regular STI check ups, including a Chlamydia test, particularly when:

- You have sex with a new or casual partner
- You have unprotected sex or the condom breaks
- Immediately if symptoms occur, e.g. discharge, or pain when passing urine
- A sexual partner has Chlamydia or symptoms of Chlamydia or other STIs.

## For testing and/or further information:

healthdirect Australia  
1800 022 222 toll-free\* available 24/7  
*\*Mobile charges may apply*

Sexual Health Helpline  
(08) 9227 6178 (Perth metropolitan area)  
1800 198 205 (country callers)

Royal Perth Hospital Sexual Health Clinic  
(08) 9224 2178

Fremantle Hospital Sexual Health Clinic  
(08) 9431 2149

[www.couldihaveit.com](http://www.couldihaveit.com)

