

Where can I find more information?

- Your nurse or doctor (registered medical practitioners can be found at the front of the phonebook).
- Student health services or school or youth health clinics
- Family Planning Association clinics (www.fpanz.org.nz)
- Auckland Sexual Health Service (www.sexfiles.co.nz)



newzealand.govt.nz

CHLAMYDIA



INFORMATION
GUIDE

New Zealand's
most commonly
diagnosed
sexually
transmitted
infection

What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common infection caused by a bacteria. It is a sexually transmissible infection (STI) that can infect the genitals, rectum, eyes and throat in women and men.

How do you get it?

Chlamydia is passed on by having sex, including vaginal, anal and oral sex, without using a condom or oral dam (a latex protection used during oral sex) with someone who has the infection. Chlamydia bacteria survive in semen and vaginal secretions and can be passed from mother to baby during birth.

Condoms help protect you and your partner from STIs when you have sex

Who is most at risk?

You are most at risk of Chlamydia infection if:

- you have had sex without a condom, or sex with a condom that has ripped or come off
- you have had more than one sexual partner in the last 12 months
- you or your partner(s) have another STI (many other STIs also have no other symptoms)
- you are under 25.

What are the symptoms?

Most people have no symptoms, but symptoms can include:

WOMEN

- ♀ unusual vaginal discharge
- ♀ pain when urinating or having sex
- ♀ bleeding after sex or between periods
- ♀ lower abdominal pain
- ♀ a discharge or discomfort in the rectum.

MEN

- ♂ a discharge or itching at the top of the penis
- ♂ painful swelling of the testicles
- ♂ pain when urinating
- ♂ a discharge or discomfort in the rectum.

How is it treated?

Treatment with antibiotics is simple and in most cases is a one-off dose of antibiotics. In some cases more antibiotics may be needed.

It's best to avoid sex for seven days after treatment to give the antibiotics time to work and to avoid passing on the infection.

What happens if it is left untreated?

Chlamydia infection can lead to health problems if not treated.

In women the bacteria may spread to the uterus (womb) and fallopian tubes and cause pelvic inflammatory disease. Pelvic inflammatory disease may cause:

- scarring and blockage of fallopian tubes
- infertility (unable to get pregnant because of blocked fallopian tubes)
- ectopic pregnancy, which is when a fertilised egg starts to grow outside the uterus. This can be dangerous.

In men, Chlamydia can travel up the penis into the testicles. Inflammation here can also cause fertility problems because sperm can not be produced efficiently.

How do I get tested?

If you have ever had sex without a condom, or the condom has ripped or come off, it's worth getting checked out.

A doctor or nurse talks to you about whether you are at risk for STIs and about your health. It is important to be honest.

The usual tests are:

- men do a urine test
- women have a low vaginal swab, which can be self-collected.

In some cases you may need to have further testing.

All consultations and testing results are confidential between you and the doctor/nurse.

If I have Chlamydia does my partner need to be treated?

Yes, all sexual partners will need to be treated even if their test results are normal.

Doctors and nurses can help you talk to your partner about Chlamydia and other STIs or give you advice if you need it.

Where can I get tested?

- Medical centres and general practices, by a doctor or nurse
- At school or youth health clinics
- Sexual health clinics
- Student health services at universities or polytechnics
- Family Planning Association clinics.