

What is Gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is a bacterial Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) of the genitals, rectum or throat.

What are the signs and symptoms of Gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea may cause:

- Vaginal discharge, pelvic pain or irregular bleeding in women.

- Anal discharge.

When the urethra is infected men may have:

- A discharge from the end of the penis.
- Irritation of the urethra.

- Pain when urinating.

When the rectum or throat is infected there are usually no symptoms.

When the cervix is infected there are usually no symptoms.

Symptoms usually occur within 2-10 days after contact with an infected partner.

Men have symptoms more often than women.

Can Gonorrhoea be cured?

Yes. In most cases a single dose of antibiotics quickly cures Gonorrhoea. More severe cases may need more antibiotics.

- Always finish all the antibiotics, because while the symptoms may disappear in a few days, the bacteria may not have been killed off.

- It is best to avoid having sex during treatment because you can still give the infection to someone else.

- If you have the single dose therapy, avoid sex for seven days after being treated.

- If you do have sex, you must use a condom for vaginal or anal sex or an oral dam for oral sex.

- Your doctor will want to see you again when you have completed the treatment.

What happens at the test for Gonorrhoea?

The doctor will talk to you and examine you.

If you have Gonorrhoea you should also be checked for other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

Tests for Gonorrhoea may include:

- A swab from the infected area.
- Women will have an internal examination.

What happens if Gonorrhoea is not treated?

In women, Gonorrhoea can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) if not treated. This is when the reproductive organs, the uterus (womb) and fallopian tubes in the pelvis become inflamed. PID may also cause:

- An ectopic pregnancy when the foetus grows in the fallopian tubes instead of the uterus.

- Infertility from the fallopian tubes becoming damaged by scar tissue.

- Chronic pain in the pelvis.

In men, if not treated, Gonorrhoea can cause:

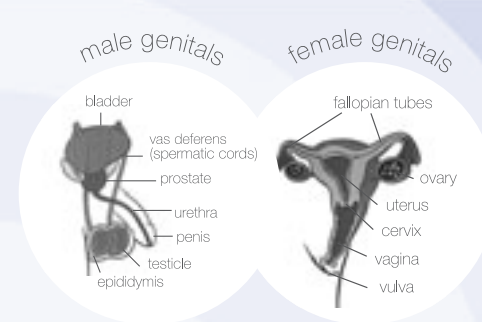
- An inflammation of the tissue which joins the testicles to the spermatic cords (the epididymis).

- Chronic inflammation of the urethra.

- Chronic discomfort on the testicles.

- Infertility, but this is not common.

Gonorrhoea can trigger chronic arthritis, but this is rare.



Should I tell my sexual partner(s) that I am being treated for Gonorrhoea?

Yes, if you have had vaginal, oral or anal sex without using a condom your partner(s) will also need treatment.

Any sexual partners should be treated even if they have no symptoms or their test results are normal.

If you need help to tell your partner(s), speak to a doctor, nurse or sexual health counsellor.

How can I protect myself from STIs?

- Always use a condom. A condom is a thin latex or polyurethane sheath, which fits over the penis. A female condom is made of polyurethane and is inserted into the vagina. The condom collects

the semen when a man comes and prevents it from entering the other person's body. Condoms make vaginal, anal and oral sex safer because they provide a barrier to prevent infection passing from person to person.

- Always use an oral dam during oral sex. An oral dam is a thin square of latex that can be used as a protective layer between

the mouth and vagina or anal areas during oral sex.

- Immunisation protects against infections such as hepatitis A and B.
- Never share drug-injecting equipment, eg, needles and syringes, spoons and filters.

Some STIs are passed from person to person by skin on skin contact and condoms or oral dams may not prevent this. So, it is important to be well informed about your sexual health. If you suspect you may have an STI, get it checked out.

To be sure you don't have an STI get tested at an FPA Centre, Sexual Health Service, or by your doctor.

Condoms will help to protect you and your partner(s) from STIs when you have sex.

How do I use a condom?

Check the condom pack to make sure the expiry date has not passed.

- 1 Open the packet carefully. Finger nails, rings and teeth can tear condoms.

Make sure the penis does not touch the partner's vagina, mouth or anus before being covered by a condom.



- 2 Check that the condom is the right way up. Pinch the top of the condom to remove any air.



- 3 Roll the condom on to the hard penis all the way down to the base. Use a water-based lubricant (eg, KY Jelly, Wet Stuff, Sylk and Top Gel). Oil-based lubricants such as vaseline can cause latex or rubber condoms to break.



- 4 After coming and when withdrawing hold the condom on to the base of the penis so that no semen is spilt.



Wrap the used condom in tissue or toilet paper and put it in the rubbish.

Use a new condom and lube each time you have sex!

Where can I get condoms?

You can get condoms and sometimes oral dams from your doctor, Family Planning Centres and Sexual Health Services. Condoms are also available from pharmacies, supermarkets, pubs, clubs and dairies. Female condoms are available from Family Planning Centres.

Where can I find out more about STIs?

- Student Health Services at your university, polytechnic or school.
- The Public Health Nurse at your school.
- Sexual Health Services under 'S' in the white pages or details on www.sexfiles.co.nz.
- Family Planning Association on 0800 FPA LINE or www.fpanz.org.nz.
- Your doctor in the front of the phone book under Registered Medical Practitioners.

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