



Chlamydia

What is chlamydia?

- Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis*.
- Most cases occur in people between 15 to 24 years of age.

How is chlamydia spread?

- Chlamydia is spread through unprotected vaginal, oral, or anal sex with an infected person.
- A pregnant woman with chlamydia can pass the infection to the baby during pregnancy or childbirth.

What are the signs and symptoms of chlamydia?

- Most individuals who are infected with chlamydia do not know it because they don't have symptoms.
- Males who have symptoms may have pain or burning on urination with clear to milky discharge from the penis.
- Females who have symptoms may have unusual or increased vaginal discharge, pain during sex, pain or burning on urination, or pelvic pain. Females may have spotting between periods or after sexual intercourse.
- Symptoms may appear 1-3 weeks (or up to 6 weeks) after exposure.

What are the long-term problems if chlamydia is not treated?

- In females, the reproductive organs (fallopian tubes and ovaries) may become infected, which may lead to chronic pelvic pain, tubal pregnancy, or infertility.
- Men can have swelling of the urethra and testicles, which can cause infertility.

How is chlamydia diagnosed?

- Most often, a urine sample is sent for testing.
- Periodic testing is recommended for people who are at risk. These include:
 - Sexual contact with a person who has Chlamydia
 - Those with a new sexual partner or more than two partners in the past year
 - Those who have had a previous STI
 - Vulnerable populations such as street youth, sex trade workers, or injection drug users
- Because most people don't have symptoms it is recommended that all sexually active individuals under 25 years be screened.
- Talk to your public health nurse, nurse practitioner, or doctor.

How is chlamydia treated?

- Chlamydia can be treated easily with antibiotics.
- The antibiotic treatment usually consists of a one-time dose of azithromycin or a week of doxycycline.
- Pregnant women may need different antibiotics.
- You can get the antibiotics **free of charge** from a nurse, nurse practitioner, doctor or an STI clinic.
- Your sexual partner(s) must be tested and treated. You and your partner must abstain from unprotected sex for a week after both of you have started antibiotic treatment or you will get the infection again. (Follow directions on the medication package).

What will decrease the risk of getting chlamydia?

- The surest way to prevent all STIs is to abstain from sexual contact or to be in a relationship with one partner who has been tested for STIs and is not infected and you only have sex with each other and no one else.
- Use condoms for every sexual encounter (including oral sex).
- Limit the number of sexual partners you have.

***For more information contact:
your local public health office,
OR your physician or nurse practitioner,
OR HealthLine at 1-877-800-0002,
OR the following sexual health clinics:***

Saskatoon Sexual Health Program
#100 – 310 Idylwyld Drive North
SASKATOON, SK S7L 0Z2
To speak with a nurse Mon-Fri, 9-12 pm
Phone: 306-655-4642

Regina STD Clinic
2110 Hamilton Street
REGINA, SK S4P 2E3
Phone: 306-766-7788

Prince Albert Parkland Sexual Health Clinic
101 15th Street East
PRINCE ALBERT, SK S6V 1G1
Phone: 306-765-6540

Battlefords Sexual Health Clinic
Rm. 104, 1192 – 101 Street
NORTH BATTLEFORD, SK S9A 0Z6
Phone: 306-937-6846

References: Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections, Chlamydia (January 2008); Chlamydia, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services; Control of Communicable Diseases Manual (2008); Red Book (2009).