

Gonorrhea

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Gonorrhea is a bacterial infection that spreads through vaginal, anal and oral sex.

Symptoms

Most people with gonorrhea have no symptoms. If symptoms occur, they can include:

- Discharge from the vagina that is different than usual
- Bleeding between periods
- Yellow or green discharge (drip) from the penis
- Pain or bleeding during or after sex
- Pain during urination
- Constipation
- Rectal pain, bleeding or discharge

Prevention

Condoms and dental dams can prevent the spread of gonorrhea. Having multiple partners increases your risk of getting or spreading sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including gonorrhea.

Testing

Depending on the kinds of sex you have, your health care provider may test samples from your urine, cervix, penis, rectum or throat. Be honest with your health care provider about the kinds of sex you have.

Treatment

Gonorrhea is treated with antibiotics. The full treatment is needed to clear the infection, so it is important to take all the medication, even if you feel better.

You should be retested after three to four months to make sure that you did not get infected again, but your

provider may recommend that you get retested sooner than three months.

Why Get Treatment

If left untreated, gonorrhea can cause severe pain, infertility (the inability to have children), and painful or swollen testicles. It can increase the risk of having a tubal (ectopic) pregnancy. Having gonorrhea also makes it more likely to get or transmit HIV.

Sex Partners

Your sex partner(s) also need to be treated so they do not develop serious health issues, reinfect you or pass on the infection to others. You should tell all of your sex partners from the previous two months about your infection so they can be examined and treated.

Gonorrhea and Pregnancy

All pregnant people should be tested for gonorrhea and other STIs, including HIV, as early as possible in pregnancy. Gonorrhea can cause miscarriage and premature labor. It can also cause infections in the eyes of a newborn baby.

New York City Sexual Health Clinics provide confidential, low- to no-cost services including STI and HIV testing.

To find a clinic, visit
nyc.gov/health/clinics.

