

# Gonorrhoea

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Gonorrhoea is a sexually transmissible infection (STI) which can cause infection of the urethra (tube that connects the bladder to the outside of the body), anus, throat, cervix (the lower part of the womb) and less commonly, the eyes.

## *How did I get infected with gonorrhoea?*

Gonorrhoea is transmitted by having anal, oral or vaginal sex without a condom with someone who is currently infected with gonorrhoea.

## *What are the symptoms of gonorrhoea?*

- You may have gonorrhoea and not show any symptoms. When symptoms are present the following may occur: stinging or burning when passing urine
- redness at the opening of the penis
- discharge from the penis
- pain or tenderness of the testicles
- anal discharge and pain
- sore throat
- sore red eye(s)
- a change in vaginal discharge
- irregular bleeding or heavier than usual periods
- pelvic pain and/or pain during sex
- bleeding after sex

## *How is gonorrhoea diagnosed?*

To test for gonorrhoea, your health care provider will collect a urine sample or swab. You may have the option of collecting your own vaginal or anal swabs. Your sample will be sent to the laboratory for testing.

## *What is the treatment for gonorrhoea?*

Gonorrhoea is usually treated with one antibiotic injection in the buttock together with oral antibiotic tablets. To prevent the spread of the infection or complications, it is important you are treated, even if you have no symptoms.

## *What can happen if gonorrhoea is not treated?*

Gonorrhoea can cause long-lasting irritation in the penis or pain in the testicles, as well as damage to the tubes that transport sperm. Untreated gonorrhoea may cause infection in the uterus and fallopian tubes known as Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID). PID can have serious effects including infertility, long-lasting pain and ectopic (tubal) pregnancy. In pregnancy, gonorrhoea can also cause complications for both the

pregnant woman and baby, therefore prompt treatment is always recommended. Untreated gonorrhoea can also cause joint infections, arthritis and permanent damage to the eye(s).

### ***Do I need to tell my sexual partner(s)?***

Yes, anyone you have had oral, anal or vaginal sex with in the past 2 months or since your last negative test should get tested.

### ***When can I have sex again?***

It's important that you don't have sex for 7 days after your treatment.

### ***Do I need further tests after I have been treated?***

Yes, you need repeat testing to check the treatment has been successful and that you haven't been re-infected. The length of time you need to wait before the repeat test depends on the site of infection. Your healthcare provider will discuss this with you.

### ***How do I avoid getting infected again?***

- make sure that your current partner(s) are tested and treated
- use a condom with new sexual partner(s).

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#### **References**

Swygard, H., Sena, A., And Cohen, M. (2015) Patient Information: Gonorrhoea (Beyond the Basics) <http://www.uptodate.com/contents/gonorrhoea-beyond-the-basics>