

GONORRHEA

What is gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea (sometimes known as "the clap" or "the drip") is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the bacteria *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*.

How is gonorrhea spread?

Gonorrhea is spread through unprotected sex (vaginal, anal or oral) with an infected partner.

What are the symptoms?

It may take 2-7 days or longer for symptoms to show up. **Many people may not have any symptoms.**

- Discharge from vagina or penis
- Burning pain when passing urine
- Pain during sex
- Bleeding between periods or after sex
- Lower stomach pain
- Rectal pain, discharge or itching
- Burning or itching around tip of penis
- Pain in testicles
- Sore throat

How is gonorrhea diagnosed?

- Swabs can be taken from the infected area (cervix, urethra, anus or throat)
- A urine sample can be collected
- Swabs can be taken when the Pap test is being performed

How is gonorrhea treated?

Gonorrhea is treated with an antibiotic that is prescribed by a doctor. It is important to take the medication as directed. It is also important to not have sex (oral, anal and/or vaginal) for seven days after taking the medication. If you have unprotected sex with your partner(s) and they have not been treated, you can get infected again.

Is follow-up important?

Yes. Clients will be asked to return to their health care provided or to The Clinic for a repeat test two weeks after taking the medication.

What about partners?

People who test positive for gonorrhea are asked to tell all sexual partner(s) so they can be tested and/or treated. A Public Health Nurse is able to help contact sexual partners as needed.

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Things to think about...

If not treated, gonorrhea can result in:

- Gonorrhea may spread to uterus and fallopian tubes (Pelvic Inflammatory Disease).
- Risk of an ectopic (tubal) pregnancy.
- Difficulty becoming pregnant
- Pelvic pain
- Reiter's Syndrome (rashes, sores and joint pain)
- Pain in testicles
- Gonorrhea is often associated with other untreated sexually transmitted infections

How can I reduce my chances of getting and spreading gonorrhea?

- Avoid sex
- Using condoms or a dental dam **every time**, even if you are using another form of birth control
- Do not share sex toys

To reduce your risk of STIs, get tested:

- After your last partner, before every new partner
- After unprotected sex, injection drug use or crack pipes
- To help prevent STIs, get vaccinated against hepatitis A, B and HPV

For more information, contact The Clinic at 519-663-5317

Reference:

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada
www.sexandu.ca

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