

Fact Sheet

Chlamydia

WHAT IS CHLAMYDIA?

Chlamydia is caused by the bacterium called *Chlamydia trachomatis*. It is the most commonly reported sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the US, California, and Los Angeles County. In Long Beach the population with the highest rates of chlamydia are those in the 20-24 age range, followed by 25-29. Additionally, having chlamydia can increase your chances of transmitting or acquiring HIV.

HOW CAN A PERSON GET CHLAMYDIA?

You can get chlamydia by having unprotected vaginal, anal, or oral sex with a person who has chlamydia. It is passed through contact with semen, vaginal fluids or discharge. Most people with chlamydia do not know they have it due to the absence or unnoticed symptoms, however they can still infect others. Chlamydia can infect the cervix, the urethra, the throat, or the rectum. It is also possible for an infected pregnant person to pass it on to their newborn baby during childbirth.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CHLAMYDIA?

Most people with chlamydia experience no symptoms. But if symptoms develop, they are often mild and may appear 1-3 weeks after being infected. Symptoms may include:

- pain during urination.
- a white, cloudy, or watery discharge from the penis.
- increased discharge from the vagina.
- may experience pain in the abdomen, fever, unusual heavy periods or bleeding between periods, or pain during sex

If chlamydia is left untreated, it can spread in the reproductive organs. Untreated chlamydia can cause scarring and inflammation of the fallopian tubes and ovaries, which is a condition called Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID). PID can cause infertility and chronic pelvic pain and can increase the risk of a life threatening ectopic (tubal) pregnancy. Untreated chlamydia can lead to a painful infection of the testicles known as epididymitis, which can cause sterility. A newborn baby to a mother with chlamydia may develop infections in the eyes or lungs.

Fact Sheet

Chlamydia

WHAT CAN A PERSON DO TO PREVENT PASSING CHLAMYDIA?

Using latex condoms provides excellent protection against chlamydia. The internal condom and polyurethane (plastic) condoms are equally effective. Sexually active persons under age 25 should test for chlamydia every six months to a year. If you do test positive for chlamydia refrain from sex until you and your sexual partner(s) have been treated. Infected pregnant people should seek prenatal care early, to prevent passing chlamydia to their newborn.

HOW DO I GET TESTED FOR CHLAMYDIA?

To get tested for chlamydia, a person should go to a doctor, health clinic, or take an at-home test kit.

- The cervix is swabbed during a pelvic exam.
- The inside of the urethra is swabbed.
- If you engage in oral or anal sex you should get tested for chlamydia in your throat and rectum.

WHAT IS TREATMENT FOR CHLAMYDIA?

Chlamydia can be treated and cured with certain antibiotics, taken orally. It takes one week for the medication to completely cure chlamydia. Make sure both you and your sex partner(s) are cured before having sex again. Since different antibiotics cure different diseases, see a doctor before taking any medications. You should not attempt to diagnose yourself or take any medicine that was not prescribed to you. Do not share medications.

RESOURCES



[Long Beach Health Department](#)



[California Department of Public Health](#)



[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)