

Chlamydia

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) that is caused by a bacterium called *Chlamydia trachomatis*. Chlamydia is a common STI that can be spread during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. It can also be transmitted from an infected mother to her baby at birth. Teenagers and young adults are most commonly infected.

Symptoms

Men

- Discharge from the penis or rectum
- Pain or burning sensation when urinating
- Pain and swelling in the testicles
- Itching of the tip of the penis

Women

- Pain and itching of the vagina or surrounding area (vulva)
- Discharge from the vagina
- Pain when urinating
- Pain when having sex

Serious complications can occur in women who have chlamydia who are not treated:

- Pelvic inflammatory disease (a serious pelvic infection in women)
- Ectopic (tubal) pregnancies
- Infertility

Testing

Men

- If the male client has no symptoms of chlamydia, the clinician may request a urine sample that will be sent to the lab for analysis.
- If the male client is symptomatic, a urethral examination will be performed.
- During a urethral exam, the clinician will wipe the opening of the penis with a small swab. The sample is then placed on a glass slide that will be stained with dye and then viewed under a microscope.

Women

- If the female client has no symptoms of chlamydia and declines a pelvic exam, the clinician may request a urine sample that will be sent to the lab for analysis. However, it is recommended that all female clients have a pelvic exam performed during the clinic visit.
- During the pelvic exam, a speculum will be inserted into the vagina. The clinician will use two small swabs to collect a sample of discharge from the vagina. The sample of discharge is placed on a glass slide and viewed under the microscope.

Treatment

- Chlamydia can be treated with antibiotics. Commonly used medications include Doxycycline (for one week) or Azithromycin (single dose).
- Since the symptoms of gonorrhea and chlamydia are similar and both diseases can occur at the same time, most people who are treated for gonorrhea are also treated for Chlamydia.
- It is recommended that individuals be re-screened three months after receiving treatment.

Prevention Tips

- Avoid unprotected sexual contact. Always use a condom during vaginal, anal, and oral sex
- Have only one sex partner
- If you are treated for chlamydia, notify your sex partners to avoid re-infection

If you think you have Chlamydia stop having sex and come to the DC Health and Wellness Center for a **CONFIDENTIAL Assessment. Free for DC Residents without insurance.**