

Gonorrhea

Gonorrhea is a very common sexual transmitted disease (STD) especially among young people ages 15-24. Anyone who is sexually active, no matter their gender or sexual orientation, can contract Gonorrhea.

Frequent Signs & Symptoms

Symptoms typically occur within 2-5 days of exposure but may not occur until 30 days after exposure. There are sometimes NO signs or symptoms. Symptoms occur more often in males than females.

Symptoms may include:

Women:

- Abnormal vaginal discharge/odor
- Irregular bleeding between periods
- Pain/burning sensation with urination

Men:

- Pain/burning sensation with urination.
- White, yellow, or green discharge from the penis
- Scrotal pain, swelling, or discomfort

Causes

Gonorrhea is caused by the bacteria *Neisseria Gonorrhoeae*. Gonorrhea is passed from one person to another during sexual intercourse. You can become infected by having vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse with a partner who has Gonorrhea. Infection can occur even if your partner does not have symptoms. You can contract Gonorrhea from an infected male partner even if ejaculation does not occur.

Prevention

The only way to avoid contracting Gonorrhea is to not have vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse (abstinence).

If you are sexually active ways to reduce your risk include:

- Maintaining a mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who has been tested and has proof of negative test results.
- Using condoms the right way EVERY time you have sex. This includes condoms with oral intercourse.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis requires laboratory testing. Often only a urine sample is required. Your health care provider may need to do an exam of your genital area.

Treatment

Your health care provider will need to prescribe an antibiotic to treat Gonorrhea. The most common treatment is a one-time oral dose of Zithromax (Azithromycin) AND an injection of Rocephin (Ceftriaxone). Notify your health care provider of any medication allergies you may have. Four weeks after treatment repeat testing will need to be done to ensure the treatment was successful. All sex partners must be treated.

Activity

You must refrain from sexual activity for a minimum of 7 days after you and your sex partner(s) have been treated. It is best to wait until repeat testing is done to re-engage in sexual activity.

Use condoms with all intercourse.

You should have routine testing at least once a year if you are sexually active.

Complications

If left untreated, Gonorrhea infection can cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) in women. PID is infection of the uterus and fallopian tubes. PID often has no symptoms but can cause abdominal pain or pelvic pain. PID can cause permanent reproductive symptom damage and lead to inability to become pregnant or ectopic pregnancy. Due to there often being no signs or symptoms of Gonorrhea, complications in women can occur before she is even aware she has been infected.

Gonorrhea can cause a painful condition known as Epididymitis (inflammation of the tubes attached to the testicles) in men. This can cause a man to become sterile and unable to father a child.

Untreated Gonorrhea can also spread to your blood or joints which can be life-threatening.

If symptoms worsen or do not improve, return to the clinic.

If you have worsening of symptoms when the Health and Wellness Center is unavailable, please follow up with the local ER or Urgent Care.

Additional Information: _____
