

PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET



COUNTY MICHIGAN
HEALTH DIVISION

Department of Health & Human Services

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Gonorrhea

What is Gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by the bacterium *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*.

How is Gonorrhea Spread?

- Gonorrhea is spread during oral, anal or vaginal sex with someone who is infected.
- Gonorrhea can be passed from a pregnant woman to her newborn infant during birth.

What are the symptoms of Gonorrhea?

Some people infected with gonorrhea have no symptoms and unknowingly pass the infection to their sex partners. If symptoms do occur, they can appear in as little as two to five days, or as long as 30 days after exposure.

Women may experience mild symptoms, if any:

- Yellowish discharge from the vagina
- Burning sensation when urinating
- Abdominal pain and/or pain during sex
- Bleeding between periods
- Fever
- Tender, enlarged cysts in the genital area

If left untreated, Gonorrhea in women may cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), chronic abdominal pain, ectopic (tubal) pregnancy, sterility, miscarriage or premature births.

Men may experience:

- Yellowish-green discharge from the penis
- Burning sensation when urinating
- Swollen or tender glands in the groin area

If left untreated, Gonorrhea in men may cause inflammation of the urethra (urethritis), inflammation of the testicles (epididymitis), or sterility.

If left untreated, Gonorrhea can spread to other organs and to joints and cause life-threatening problems in both men and women.

How is Gonorrhea diagnosed?

There are laboratory tests to diagnose Gonorrhea. Some can be performed on urine; other tests require that a specimen be collected from a site such as the penis or cervix.



Over

How is Gonorrhea treated?

Gonorrhea is treated with antibiotics. It is very important that you:

- Take all medicine as prescribed, even if you start to feel better. Inform your health care provider before taking any medicine if you think you may be pregnant.
- Inform your sex partner(s) that you have Gonorrhea and encourage them to be tested and treated.
- Stop all sexual activity until treatment is complete.

How can Gonorrhea be prevented?

- Don't have sex. You cannot give or get an STD if there is no contact with the penis, vagina, mouth or anus of an infected person.
- If you choose to have sex, use a condom with a water-based lubricant. Use a new condom every time.
- Limit your number of sexual partners. The more people you have sex with, the greater the chance of getting Gonorrhea or another STD.
- Have regular medical exams if you are sexually active. If you think you have a STD, get tested.
- Tell your partner if you are infected. Tell anyone you have had sex with that they need to be tested.

For more information on Gonorrhea, call (248) 858-1406 or toll free 1 (800) 848-5533.

For additional copies, visit our website at www.oakgov.com/health.

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