

## What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a tiny bacterium, *Chlamydia trachomatis*. The infection is spread through any kind of sexual contact with a partner where bodily fluids may be exchanged. If you haven't heard of Chlamydia, you're in good company – a substantial proportion of the UK population hasn't either.

## Why should I know about it?

Chlamydia is the most common STI in the UK, 1 in 14 people are estimated to have it.

Chlamydia can be easily treated, but it often has no symptoms in either men or women, so remains undetected. Under 25s account for 65% of the UK's Chlamydia infections which means that young people are at high risk of contracting the infection.

Infection may only be diagnosed once Chlamydia has led to complications - when treatment can sometimes be too late to stop permanent damage.

## Are there any symptoms?

There are often no symptoms so the best way to make sure is to take a test.

### Women

In women, genital Chlamydia does not always cause symptoms. Some women may notice:

- Cystitis (pain when passing urine)
- Change in vaginal discharge
- Lower abdominal pain,
- Pain and/or bleeding during or after sexual intercourse
- Bleeding between periods or heavier periods

If left untreated the infection can spread to the womb, and cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease which is a major cause of infertility and miscarriage.

### Men

Some men experience mild symptoms that disappear after two or three days. However, after the discomfort disappears, the infection remains. Left untreated you are at risk of complications such as infertility. Some men may notice:

- White, cloudy or watery discharge from the tip of the penis
- Pain when passing urine
- Pain in the testicles

## What does the test involve?

You choose how we notify you of your results - text, phone or letter and we won't give your result to anyone except you. It's easy and confidential.

### Women

A simple vaginal swab sample can be done in the privacy of your own home then placed into the container provided and sent to a laboratory. These postal tests avoid the need for an intimate and uncomfortable examination and make testing much easier for women.

### Men

For men, a urine sample is required avoiding the discomfort of a swab from inside the tip of the penis. The sample is sent to a laboratory for testing.

## How is Chlamydia treated?

Chlamydia is treated easily and quickly with free antibiotics provided to you by us.

We advise that you stop having sexual contact for a week after treatment to ensure the infection is completely gone. We also advise that your sexual partner also gets treatment. Otherwise, the treated partner becomes re-infected.

## How can I make sure I don't get chlamydia?

- Condoms are the best way to protect against STI's, always use a condom with new sexual partners.
- Before you stop using condoms, make sure you and your partner get checked out for STIs by requesting a postal kit on [pee4pants.co.uk](http://pee4pants.co.uk)

**If you would like more information about Chlamydia visit [takethetestnow.org.uk](http://takethetestnow.org.uk) or call us on 01793 428525**

