

Gonorrhea

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- May be mild or absent, especially in women
- Usually begin 2-7 days after exposure

For women:

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding, discharge or itching
- Burning or pain during urination or bowel movement
- More pain than usual during periods
- Cramps and pain in lower abdomen
- Anal discomfort, itching or discharge

For men:

- Thick, white or yellow discharge (pus) from penis
- Burning or pain during urination or bowel movement
- Anal discomfort, itching or discharge

TRANSMISSION

Gonorrhea is spread by:

- Vaginal sex
- Oral sex
- Anal sex
- Infected mother to newborn

COMPLICATIONS

If left untreated, gonorrhea can:

- Spread to sex partners
- Lead to pelvic inflammatory disease
- Lead to ectopic (tubal) pregnancy
- Lead to infertility in men and women
- Cause infection in the joints
- Make it easier to transmit or acquire HIV during sex

During pregnancy, gonorrhea infection:

- May be passed to newborn during childbirth
- May cause serious eye infection in newborn
- May infect other organs

PREVENTION

- Avoiding vaginal, oral or anal sex is the best way to prevent STDs.
- Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, can reduce the risk of transmission of gonorrhea.
- Always use latex condoms during vaginal and anal sex.
- Use a latex condom for oral sex on a penis.
- Use a latex barrier (dental dam or condom cut in half) for oral sex on a vagina or anus.
- Limit the number of sex partners.
- Notify sex partners immediately if infected.
- Make sure partners are tested and treated at same time to prevent re-infection.

TESTING AND TREATMENT

- Get a test from a medical provider if infection is suspected.
- Gonorrhea can be cured using medication prescribed by a medical provider.
- Partners should be treated at the same time.

NOTE: A person can be re-infected after treatment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Minnesota Department of Health
STD and HIV Section
(651) 201-5414
www.health.state.mn.us/std

Minnesota Family Planning and STD Hotline
1-800-783-2287 Voice/TTY; (651) 645-9360 (Metro)
www.sexualhealthmn.org

American Social Health Association (ASHA)
www.ashastd.org

CDC National STD and AIDS Hotlines
1-800-CDC-INFO; 1-888-232-6348 TTY
www.cdc.gov/std