

# Your partner has Chlamydia: What you need to know

## DIRECTIONS & INFORMATION FOR PARTNERS OF PERSONS DIAGNOSED WITH CHLAMYDIA INFECTION

### What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted infection (STIs) in the United States. Chlamydia is caused by bacteria that is easily spread by **any kind** of sexual contact, including oral, vaginal, and/or anal sex with someone who already has chlamydia. Pregnant people can also give it to their baby at birth.

### What are the symptoms of chlamydia?

Unfortunately, it is **very common for people to not have any symptoms** (also called being “asymptomatic”) of chlamydia. Because it is possible that someone can be infected with chlamydia and not know it and pass it on to other people, it is important to get tested for STIs, including chlamydia at least yearly if you are having sex and when you have new partner(s).

### What happens if chlamydia is not treated?

Chlamydia **can lead to serious health problems if not treated**, even if the person with chlamydia does not have symptoms. Some of the possible health issues that may happen if chlamydia is not treated are:

- A more serious infection in people with female body parts (like a uterus, ovaries, and/or fallopian tubes) called Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) that may lead to inability to get pregnant (“infertility”), complications in future pregnancies such as a pregnancy outside of the womb (“ectopic pregnancy”), and/or long-term issues with pain.
- An infection of different male body parts (like a penis or testicles), which can rarely cause inability to have children (“infertility”).
- Untreated infection increases your risk of getting or giving HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

### How do I take my medicine to treat chlamydia?

Most people will be given an antibiotic called doxycycline. You should take the doxycycline two times a day with food until the medication is gone. Most people are given 7 days of medicine. Some people who cannot have doxycycline may be given a different antibiotic called azithromycin that is only one dose, however this medication may not be as effective as doxycycline. **Do not share your antibiotic with anyone else. You need to take all the medication given to you for it to be effective and get rid of all the infection.**

## What happens if I have a side effect to the medication?

Antibiotics (doxycycline or azithromycin) used to treat chlamydia are very safe. Stomach upset, diarrhea, headache, and nausea are common side effects of all antibiotics, and it is normal for people who take them to get these symptoms. They are not serious and should go away once you finish your antibiotics. These side effects are not an allergy to the antibiotic.

Allergic reactions are extremely rare. If you think you may have had an allergy to an antibiotic in the past, ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking the medication. Even if you had an allergy to one antibiotic in the past, you still may be able to take the antibiotic prescribed to you this time. **If at any time you develop difficulty breathing, swelling of your face or neck, hives (a bumpy, itchy rash), or watery diarrhea bad enough that you can't leave the house, go to the nearest emergency department.**

## What should I do next?

- **Do not engage in any kind of sex for 7 days AFTER FINISHING your medicine – it takes the medication that long to fully treat the infection, so you do not pass it on to other people deal with more severe medical issues.**
- Tell all the people who you have had sex with in the last 2 months (or your last partner) that you are being treated for chlamydia so they can be tested and treated, too.
- People who are infected with chlamydia are very likely to get it again – it is a good idea to get tested for chlamydia and other STIs in about 3 months.
- Because many people with chlamydia may not know they are infected because they do not have symptoms, it is important for you to get tested for STIs on a regular basis (about every 6-12 months) and when you have new sex partner(s).
- Using condoms and having sex with partner(s) who practice safe sex and get regularly tested will reduce your chances of getting chlamydia again.
- **IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS: contact a medical professional (like a doctor or pharmacist), call the Minnesota Family Planning and STD Hotline at 1-800-783-2287, and/or visit a sexual health clinic like Red Door Clinic (612-543-5555) or Clinic 555 (651-266-1255).**
- **If you have more partners that you feel would benefit from treatment, have them call the Minnesota Family Planning and STD Hotline at 1-800-783-2287, and/or visit a sexual health clinic like Red Door Clinic (612-543-5555) or Clinic 555 (651-266-1255).**

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*To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5414.*