

Chlamydia

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection that typically involves the mucous membranes in the urethra, rectum (butt), or throat. It's caused by the bacteria *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

How common is it?

Chlamydia is the most common bacterial sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the U.S., with more than a million new cases reported every year.

How do you get it?

Chlamydia can be spread by all kinds of sex including oral, anal, vaginal, or front hole sex and by activities like fisting and fingering. Touching any part of your or your partner's body that is infected with chlamydia and then touching your genitals or butt can spread chlamydia.

How is it diagnosed?

We diagnose chlamydia by swabbing your throat, butt, vagina, or front hole. Some practitioners also allow you to do your own swabs. Urine tests are usually used to test for chlamydia infection in the urethra. Swabbing the areas of your body you use for sex is important.

How is it prevented?

Lower the risk of getting chlamydia by using condoms. But condoms sometimes don't cover all infected areas so there's a chance of still getting or passing on chlamydia even when condoms are used.

What are the symptoms?

Not everyone who has chlamydia will show symptoms, especially if the site of infection is the butt or throat. Symptoms can include a dry or sore throat, itchiness and pain when you have a bowel movement, pain when you urinate, or a clear or yellow discharge from your penis, vagina, or front hole. Throat infections can also cause discharge, but this is less common. Chlamydia symptoms usually take about a week to show up.

How is it treated?

We can cure a chlamydia infection with antibiotics.

Should my sex partners get treated too?

If you had sex while you were infected with chlamydia, your sexual partners should also get tested for chlamydia and treated if they are infected.

Special considerations with HIV?

For a person who is HIV-negative, having chlamydia can make it more likely that they will be infected with HIV if they are exposed to the virus (in the absence of PrEP, U=U, or other HIV prevention methods).

Sexual health services from San Francisco AIDS Foundation

Get free sexual health services including STI & HIV testing, PrEP, PEP, anal health care, harm reduction supplies, gender-affirming hormones & more.

We can test and treat chlamydia at Magnet, the sexual health clinic at San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

VISIT US

470 Castro Street, San Francisco
(415) 581-1600



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