

# Gonorrhea

## What is gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted bacterial infection that can happen in your penis, rectum (butt), throat, vagina, or front hole. It's caused by a bacteria called *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*.

## How common is it?

In the United States, gonorrhea is the second most commonly reported communicable disease with more than 500,000 cases reported annually.

## How do you get it?

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

## How is it diagnosed?

A medical practitioner can diagnose gonorrhea by swabbing (collecting specimens from) your throat, butt, vagina, or front hole. Some practitioners allow you to do your own swabs. Urine tests are usually used to test for gonorrhea infection in the urethra.

## How is it prevented?

Using a condom during sex can help prevent you from getting gonorrhea if the area of your partner's body that is infected is covered. But condoms don't always cover the entire area that's infected, so there may be risk of getting or

transmitting gonorrhea even if a condom is used. You can get gonorrhea if you touch an infected area of your partner's body and then touch your own penis, vagina, front hole, butt, or eyes. You can also get gonorrhea during oral sex.

## What are the symptoms?

Not everyone who has gonorrhea will show symptoms. Symptoms can include: painful urination, discharge from your penis, vagina, or front hole, a dry or sore throat, discharge from your throat, itchiness when you urinate or have a bowel movement, anal discharge, soreness, bleeding from your anus, painful/or swollen scrotum or testicles, and vaginal bleeding between periods.

## How is it treated?

We can treat gonorrhea infections with antibiotics.

## Should my sex partners get treated too?

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

## Special considerations with HIV?

For a person who is HIV-negative, having gonorrhea 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).

For a person who is HIV-positive, gonorrhea symptoms and complications may be more severe.

## 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 gonorrhea at Magnet, the sexual health clinic at San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

### VISIT US

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