



Chlamydia

What is chlamydia (cla-mid-eya)?

Chlamydia is a sexually transmissible infection (STI).

We need to get informed about chlamydia so we can stop people in our community from getting it.

Who does Chlamydia affect?

In Australia most people who get chlamydia are young people (men and women) aged 15-29 years.

Chlamydia is very common in remote areas of Australia.

How do you get chlamydia?

Men and women can give each other chlamydia from having vaginal, anal or oral sex without using a condom.

Babies can be born with chlamydia if their mother has chlamydia. The baby can get a lung infection (pneumonia) or a bad eye infection.

Symptoms – how would I know if I had chlamydia?

Most people with chlamydia don't get symptoms or signs. You can have chlamydia and not know it.

Men sometimes get a discharge from the penis and pain when peeing. Men can also get swollen and sore testicles (balls).

Women sometimes get a discharge from the vagina and pain when peeing. Women can also get cramps, pain in the lower tummy, and bleeding between periods or after sex.

But most people who have chlamydia don't have symptoms. The only way of knowing whether you have chlamydia is to get tested.



Testing for chlamydia

Testing for chlamydia is simple and done at the clinic.

You can get tested for chlamydia as part of your men's or women's health check – just ask.

The test is done in private. You will be given a jar to fill with pee for testing. If you have a discharge they may take a swab.

If you have sex with someone new, you should have a chlamydia test.

If you are between 15 and 29, you should test for chlamydia at least every six to 12 months.

Don't be shame

Testing regularly for STIs means you're looking after your health and respecting your partners. If more people in our community test regularly for STIs, and get treated, everyone is better off.

Test results are confidential. No one else in your family, your partner or community will be told about your result without your permission.

Your confidential test results are sent to health departments so we know whether STI and BBV rates are going up or down in a community. The test results are strictly guarded in confidential computers and locked rooms and only used to understand level of infections in a region. Health departments only let a small number of doctors or nurses use the confidential computers with STI or BBV records to keep the information safe.

What's the treatment for chlamydia?

The treatment for chlamydia is easy - usually one lot of antibiotic tablets.

It's important that you don't have sex for 7 days after you and your partner have been treated.



Getting treated for an STI doesn't stop you picking up the same STI again. It's important to keep using condoms and to keep testing regularly for STIs – at least every six to 12 months.

What if I don't get treated?

You can pass chlamydia on to someone else if you don't use a condom.

If you are pregnant and don't get treated, chlamydia can be passed on to your baby during birth.

Chlamydia can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in women. This can make it difficult to have babies.

Chlamydia can cause infertility in men and women. People who are infertile cannot have children.

Letting partners know they need to test

If you are diagnosed with an STI, you will need to let your sexual partners know they should get tested. This is to make sure they don't have an STI too. This is called "contact tracing".

Contact tracing is not about blame. It's just to make sure that as many people as possible who may have an STI get tested and treated.

The clinic can help you with contact tracing – but only with your permission. This is confidential – the clinic will let people you have had sex with know that it's time to have a test. The clinic will not mention your name to the people they contact.

The [Better to know](#) website has advice about different ways you can let people you've had sex with know that they need to have an STI test – including on how to do this anonymously - without giving your name.



Condoms can stop STIs from spreading; here's how to use a condom:

- ⦿ Check expiry date, check the package is not damaged and open with care
- ⦿ Pinch the tip so air doesn't get trapped
- ⦿ Roll on when the penis is hard
- ⦿ Use water-based lubricant (lube). Oil based lubricant can damage the condom
- ⦿ When withdrawing, hold the base of the condom so semen (cum) doesn't spill out
- ⦿ Tie a knot in the used condom and put it in the bin. Not down the toilet as it will block the pipes.

Let's look after our health and get tested for STIs. If we all test and get treated, we can stop the spread of STIs in our community.