



# Donovanosis

## What is donovanosis (donovan-osis)

Donovanosis is a sexually transmissible infection (STI).

Donovanosis is not common in most of Australia but people in some northern Australian communities are at low risk of getting it.

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

## How do you get donovanosis?

You can get donovanosis when you have vaginal, anal or oral sex with someone who has donovanosis and you don't use a condom.

## Symptoms – how would I know if I got donovanosis?

Donovanosis can cause ulcers (sores) around the vagina, penis or anus (bum). These get bigger and painful if they aren't treated. The sores can smell bad. Symptoms or signs usually start a few weeks of getting donovanosis. The only way of knowing whether you have donovanosis is to get tested.

## Testing for donovanosis?

Testing for donovanosis is simple and can be done at the clinic.

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

A swab from an ulcer will be taken for testing.

The test is done in private.

Get tested for STIs 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 partner. If more people in our community test regularly for STIs, and get treated, everyone is better off.



Test results are confidential. Your partner will not be told about your result without your permission, No one else in your family 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 donovanosis?**

Donovanosis is treated with antibiotics.

After treatment, it's important that you don't have sex until all the sores have gone and your partner has finished treatment too.

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.

### **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.



If you prefer to do this yourself, have a look at the **Better to know** website for 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.

### **What if I don't get treated?**

If donovanosis is not treated, the sores won't go away and they'll get bigger. This can destroy large areas of skin.

Untreated donovanosis can lead to cancer.

### **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.*