



Gonorrhoea

What is gonorrhoea (gonna-ria)?

Gonorrhoea is a sexually transmissible infection (STI).

Gonorrhoea is very common in our community.

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

Who does gonorrhoea affect?

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

Gonorrhoea is really common in remote areas of Australia

You can get gonorrhoea from having vaginal, anal or oral sex with someone who has gonorrhoea and you don't use a condom.

Babies can get gonorrhoea from their mother during birth.

Symptoms – how would I know if I got gonorrhoea?

Most people get symptoms or signs when they first get gonorrhoea but these can go away after a week or so. Some people don't get symptoms at all. This means you can have gonorrhoea and not know it.

Men can get a white, yellow, or green discharge like pus from the penis. Men can also get swollen and sore testicles (balls) and pain when peeing.

Women can get yellow or green discharge like pus from the vagina. Women can also get pain in the lower belly, especially during sex. Women can also get bleeding between periods or after sex. Peeing can be painful and more often than usual.

You can get gonorrhoea from having sex with someone who has it even if they don't have symptoms.



The only way of knowing whether you have gonorrhoea is to get tested.

Testing for gonorrhoea

Testing for gonorrhoea can be done at the clinic. You can get tested as part of your men's or women's health check – just ask.

You will be given a jar to fill with pee for testing. If you have a discharge, they may also take a swab.

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

The clinic can help you with contact tracing – but only with your permission. 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 gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is treated with antibiotics. You may get the antibiotics by injection as well as tablets.

Antibiotics can cure gonorrhoea – but only if you follow your doctor's advice about taking them.



It is important not to have sex until 7 days after the antibiotic treatment is complete and your partner has been treated 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.

What if I don't get treated?

Gonorrhoea will stay in your body until you get treated.

If you don't get treated and cured, you can pass it onto anyone you have sex with – even if you don't have symptoms.

The earlier you get tested and go onto antibiotics, the easier it is to cure it and less damage is done to your body.

Gonorrhoea can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) in women. PID can cause abscesses or sores and pain in the lower belly and can cause infertility – being unable to ever have a baby.

Gonorrhoea can also make men infertile – unable to ever father a baby.

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 support you with contact tracing. 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.

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 STIs. If we all test and get treated, we can stop the spread of STIs in our community.