

## Gonorrhoea – patient information

### Why am I receiving this information?

You have been, or are suspected of being, infected with gonorrhoea. This leaflet contains information about gonorrhoea, how it is treated and what you need to do.

### What is gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is a disease caused by a bacterium. If you are infected, gonorrhoea can be found in the urethra, vagina, rectum, and throat.

### Will I notice if I have gonorrhoea?

Many people infected with gonorrhoea exhibit no symptoms, that is, they do not notice that they have an infection. Some people feel a burning sensation when they urinate. Others get a sore throat if the bacterium is present there.

Women may experience a yellowish vaginal discharge and/or pain in the lower abdomen. Men may experience a yellowish discharge from the urethra and a painful scrotum. If you have had anal intercourse, you may experience a discharge from the rectum.

### Is gonorrhoea dangerous?

Without treatment, women can suffer damage to the fallopian tubes, which can make it difficult to get pregnant or cause the foetus to develop outside the uterus (ectopic pregnancy). Men can develop epididymitis, a condition affecting a structure at the back of the testicles. Gonorrhoea can also cause eye infections and, occasionally, joint ache.

### How is gonorrhoea transmitted?

Gonorrhoea is transmitted primarily through unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex. It can also be spread by heavy petting and sex toys. Gonorrhoea is highly contagious even if you do not have any symptoms.

You do not develop immunity to gonorrhoea and, as such, you can get infected multiple times.

Gonorrhoea is **not** transmitted through clothing, towels or toilets.

### How is gonorrhoea treated and how long am I contagious?

Gonorrhoea is treated with antibiotics (injections and/or tablets). Treatment is provided free of charge. The infection clears up if you take the medicine as you are prescribed and follow the advice you are given.

If you are booked for a follow-up appointment, you must attend the clinic. New samples are normally taken after about two weeks to check that the infection is gone.

### What do I need to keep in mind so as not to infect others?

Gonorrhoea is a disease classified as a danger to public health under the Communicable Diseases Act. If you have or are suspected of having gonorrhoea, you must follow certain rules, so-called rules of conduct.

### Rules of conduct

- You must tell anyone you have sex with that you have or may have gonorrhoea.
- You must use protection if you have sex before your treatment/testing is completed.
- If you have been given a follow-up appointment, you must attend it.

If you have been issued rules of conduct you believe to be wrong, you can contact your county medical officer.

If you have gonorrhoea, you must not risk infecting anyone. The safest way to do this is to not have sexual intercourse or any other type of sex until after your doctor says that you no longer have gonorrhoea. This is usually when your doctor have received the results from the test sample taken after a couple of weeks. If you still have sex, you must tell your partner that you have gonorrhoea and you must use protection (condom).

### Contact tracing

It is very important that we find people with gonorrhoea so that they can receive treatment, in part to reduce the risk of damage (see above) and in part so that the infection is not spread to more people.

The Communicable Diseases Act requires that you participate in contact tracing. This means that you must provide your contact tracer with information about the people with whom you have had sex. Sometimes, you may need to provide information about partners going back as far as one year.

Everything you disclose is kept confidential (secret) and your identity will not be revealed to the people you name. They will only be informed that they need to get tested. Nor will the information be recorded in your medical records. Instead, it will be recorded in a special contact tracing document.

### More information

You can find more information about gonorrhoea at 1177, Youmo (for anyone aged 13 to 20 and wanting information in another language) and UMO (online youth healthcare clinic).

[www.1177.se](http://www.1177.se)



[www.youmo.se](http://www.youmo.se)



[www.umo.se](http://www.umo.se)



### About this infection prevention sheet

This infection prevention sheet was produced by the Swedish Association of County Medical Officers and applies nationally.