

## Chlamydia – patient information

### Why am I receiving this information?

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

### What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common disease caused by a bacterium. If you are infected, chlamydia can be found in the urethra, vagina and/or rectum. Occasionally, it can also be found in the throat.

### Will I notice if I have chlamydia?

Most people who are infected exhibit no symptoms, that is, you will not notice that you have the infection. You can have chlamydia for a long time, sometimes years, without noticing it.

Some people feel a slight burning sensation when they urinate.

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

### Is chlamydia dangerous?

Without treatment, women can suffer damage to the fallopian tubes, which can make it difficult to get pregnant. This can also 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. Chlamydia can also cause eye infections and, occasionally, joint ache.

### How is chlamydia transmitted?

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

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

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

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

Chlamydia is treated with antibiotics (tablets). Treatment is provided free of charge. The infection clears up if you take the tablets as you are prescribed and follow the advice you are given. Ten days after you started taking the antibiotic tablets, you are no longer contagious. If you have taken your medicine, you do not need to get tested again to check whether the infection is gone. If you are pregnant, however, you will need to get tested again.

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

Chlamydia is a disease classified as a danger to public health under the Communicable Diseases Act. So as not to infect others, if you have or are suspected of having chlamydia, 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 chlamydia.
- You must use protection (condom) 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 chlamydia, 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 ten (10) days after you started taking your antibiotic tablets. If you still have sex, you must tell your partner that you have chlamydia and you must use protection (condom).

## Contact tracing

It is very important that we find people with chlamydia 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 chlamydia 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.