

Gonorrhea

Neisseria gonorrhoeae



Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by bacteria and can be cured. It is the second most common STD reported in Wisconsin. People can have gonorrhea without having symptoms for months if not treated. Women can have damage to reproductive organs. Men and women can give gonorrhea to their sex partners. You can get gonorrhea again after treatment and gonorrhea can increase the risk of you getting HIV.



How is it spread and who gets gonorrhea?

- ▶ Gonorrhea is spread by having vaginal, anal, and/or oral sex with someone who has it. Babies can get gonorrhea during birth if the mother has it as well.
- ▶ If you have sex, you can get gonorrhea; however, there are groups of people more likely to get gonorrhea:
 - Young people who have sex
 - If you or your sex partner have **any** STD, you can also get gonorrhea.
 - If you have more than one sex partner and/or a new sex partner.



What are the signs and symptoms?

- ▶ Most people have NO symptoms when they have gonorrhea, but find out when they get tested.
- ▶ Men and women may have a burning feeling when urinating, discharge or a penile or vaginal discharge. Men may also feel they need to urinate more often. Women may have lower back pain and/or spotting between periods. If you get these symptoms it is usually 3-10 days after having sex with someone who has gonorrhea.



What are the testing and treatment options?

- ▶ You can get tested for gonorrhea at a doctor's office, family planning clinic, or an STD clinic. Getting tested and treated early can prevent serious problems and stop the spread of gonorrhea. If you have gonorrhea, get your recent sex partners of the past three months tested AND treated. They may not have symptoms but still have gonorrhea. If you have sex with the same partner, you can get infected again unless they get tested and treated.
- ▶ You can get treated with a one time dose of ceftriaxone and azithromycin. Women who don't get treated can get pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) which is very painful. PID can lead to making it hard to have a baby and cause scar tissue which can lead to ectopic pregnancies. In men, it can lead to pain in the testicles and sterility. Both men and women who don't get treated can get painful arthritis.



How can I prevent getting gonorrhea?

- ▶ There are many ways to prevent getting gonorrhea and it's as easy as **ABC**:
 - A**void having sex until you feel prepared to protect yourself. For instance;
 - B**e monogamous or have sex with just one person who only has sex with you and doesn't have any STDs. You can find out if both of you have an STD like gonorrhea by getting tested together.
 - C**ondoms can protect you from getting gonorrhea but only where they cover. If you are not using them for oral sex, you can still get gonorrhea.

