

Chlamydia

What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by the bacterium, *Chlamydia trachomatis*, which can damage a woman's reproductive organs.

How do people get Chlamydia?

Chlamydia can be transmitted during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Chlamydia can also be passed from an infected mother to her baby during a vaginal birth.

What are the symptoms of Chlamydia?

Many people do not have symptoms. If symptoms do occur, it is usually between 1 and 3 weeks after exposure. Some symptoms include, abnormal discharge from penis or vagina, burning or pain while peeing, irritation around the anus, itching around the opening of the penis, bleeding between menstrual periods, painful intercourse (women), and lower abdominal or back pain (women).

What is the treatment for Chlamydia?

Chlamydia can be easily treated and cured with antibiotics. All partners must be treated to prevent so you don't get infected again. A follow-up exam is needed to ensure the treatment worked.

What complications can result from untreated Chlamydia?

If untreated, chlamydial infections can progress to serious reproductive and other health problems with both short-term and long-term consequences. Like the disease itself, the damage that chlamydia causes is often "silent."

In women, untreated infection can spread into the uterus or fallopian tubes and cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can cause permanent damage to the fallopian tubes, uterus, and surrounding tissues. The damage can lead to chronic pelvic pain, infertility, and potentially fatal ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outside the uterus). Women infected with chlamydia are up to five times more likely to become infected with HIV, if exposed.

Complications among men are rare. Infection sometimes spreads to the epididymis (the tube that carries sperm from the testis), causing pain, fever, and, rarely, sterility.

Rarely, genital chlamydial infection can cause arthritis that can be accompanied by skin lesions and inflammation of the eye and urethra (Reiter's syndrome)

Where can I get more information? <http://www.cdc.gov/std/chlamydia/default.htm>

Chlamydia rates for Asotin County can be found at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/notify/nc/incidence/chlamydia/pdf>.

