

# Gonorrhea

A curable STD caused by the bacteria *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*

## Signs and Symptoms

- Many people do not have symptoms.
- If symptoms occur, they usually appear between 2 -7 days after exposure, but may last up to 30 days.
- Abnormal discharge from penis/vagina
- Burning or pain while peeing
- Irritation around the anus; bleeding or painful bowel movements
- Soreness or swelling around top of penis
- Painful or swollen testicles
- Bleeding between menstrual periods
- Painful intercourse (women)
- Lower abdominal or back pain (women)

## Transmission

- Oral, anal or vaginal sex
- Infected mother to baby at vaginal birth

## Prevention

- Use condoms/barriers consistently and correctly for oral, anal or vaginal sex.
- Maintain a mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who has been tested and/or treated for STDs.
- Get an infected partner treated.
- Get tested regularly, and treated for STDs.
- Do not have sex with a partner who has gonorrhea until 1 week after they have completed treatment and no longer have symptoms.

Visit our web sites:  
for more info about STDs  
[www.kingcounty.gov/stdfacts](http://www.kingcounty.gov/stdfacts)  
for info on getting tested and treated  
[www.kingcounty.gov/stdtesting](http://www.kingcounty.gov/stdtesting)

## Treatment

- See a health care provider for exam and tests to figure out the best treatment.
- Treatment is typically a shot given in a clinic and might also include pills prescribed by a health care provider.
- If pregnant, get a follow-up exam to make sure the treatment worked.

## If Not Treated

- Can increase risk for getting or spreading HIV.
- Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (women)
- Infertility (women)
- Ectopic (tubal) pregnancy
- Chronic pelvic pain
- During pregnancy:
  - Premature delivery
  - Low birth weight in newborns
  - Eye and respiratory tract infections in newborns

## Help Stop the Spread of Gonorrhea

- Refrain from oral, anal or vaginal sex if you have symptoms.
- Seek medical care, including STD tests.
- Do not have sex until 7 days after you have completed treatment.
- Take all medicines prescribed, even if your symptoms are gone.
- Re-test in 3 months.
- Make sure sex partners get treated.
- Get yearly STD screenings if sexually active.
- If you are pregnant, get tested for STDs/HIV.

Public Health   
Seattle & King County  
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