

## For more information:

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Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP)  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov/std](http://www.cdc.gov/std)

CDC-INFO Contact Center  
1-800-CDC-INFO  
1-800-232-4636  
[cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov)

If you have been diagnosed with any sexually transmitted disease (STD), your sexual partner(s) should be tested for HIV and other STDs, even if they have no symptoms. If you have been diagnosed with any STD, including HIV, you should have a blood test in three months to detect blood-borne infections you might have contracted at the time you tested positive for any STD.

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OKLAHOMA  
State Department  
of Health



SEXUAL HEALTH &  
HARM REDUCTION  
SERVICE

# GONORRHEA

## Facts & Info

### What is Gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, a bacterium that can damage reproductive organs.



## How do you get gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea can be transmitted during vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has gonorrhea. It can also be passed from a mother to her newborn baby during childbirth.

## Can gonorrhea be prevented?

The only way to avoid sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is to not have vaginal, anal or oral sex. Limiting the number of sex partners and using condoms the right way every time you have sex can reduce the risk of getting gonorrhea.

## How is gonorrhea diagnosed?

Gonorrhea can be diagnosed with simple laboratory tests. Some can be performed on urine, or swabs from oral, vaginal and anal sites and should be done at any site there has been sexual contact.

## How is gonorrhea treated?

Antibiotics can successfully cure gonorrhea. However, drug-resistant strains of gonorrhea are increasing in the United States, and successful treatment of gonorrhea is becoming more difficult. Persons with gonorrhea should be tested for other STIs.

Repeat infection with gonorrhea is common. You should be tested again about three months after you are treated, even if your sex partners have been treated.

### What are the symptoms of gonorrhea?

- Abnormal periods or bleeding between periods;
- Painful or burning sensation when urinating;
- Increased vaginal discharge.
- Discharge from the penis;
- Painful or swollen testicles (this is less common);
- Painful intercourse bleeding/spotting post intercourse ;
- Anal pain, anal discharge, anal bleeding, anal itching,
- Sore throat fever, chills, swelling and pain in joints, tendons, wrist, and skin rash.

## What happens if I don't get treated?

Gonorrhea stays in your body if it is not treated. Gonorrhea can also spread to the blood or joints. This condition can be very serious.

Gonorrhea can spread into the uterus or fallopian tubes and cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a serious infection of the reproductive organs. PID can also cause damage that makes you unable to get pregnant.

Untreated gonorrhea may cause chronic pain in your pelvic area or you could pass it to your baby. Gonorrhea can cause serious health problems for babies. Untreated gonorrhea can also increase the risk of getting HIV or passing HIV to a partner.

You may develop a painful condition in the testicles. In rare cases, this may prevent you from having children.

### When will the symptoms appear?

**Symptoms usually appear within 2 to 21 days after contact.**

**Many individuals do not have symptoms for gonorrhea.**