

# Chlamydia

## What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by the bacterium (a germ) *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

## What are the symptoms?

Many people with chlamydia have no symptoms. If symptoms do occur, they usually appear two to three weeks after infection (the incubation period) but it can take as long as six weeks.

INFECTION	DESCRIPTION
Infection of the cervix could include:	An unusual discharge (a fluid that flows out of the opening of the vagina), unusual odor, pain during intercourse, and bleeding between menstrual periods, lower abdominal pain, fever and nausea.
Infection of the urethra could include:	Yellow or white watery or milky discharge, a painful burning sensation during urination, urethral itching, and testicular pain and swelling. Rectal pain, and bleeding.
Infection of the throat could include:	A sore throat.
Infection of the eye could include:	A condition called conjunctivitis (also known as pink eye) which presents as itchy red eyes and a green, white or yellow discharge that crusts over the eye.

Note: Symptoms of chlamydia may vary for trans persons if they have had bottom surgery and depending on the type of surgery.

## How is chlamydia spread?

Chlamydia, with or without symptoms, is spread by having unprotected vaginal, anal, or oral sex with an infected partner. It can be passed from mother to child during childbirth. If you have chlamydia, you should notify everyone you have had sex with in the past 60 days. If you have not had sex in the past 60 days, you should contact the last person you had sex with.



## How is chlamydia diagnosed?

- Testing for chlamydia can be done with a urine test or through swabbing; a swab from the cervix and urethra.
- You should be retested for chlamydia three months post treatment.
- You should also be tested for other sexually transmitted and blood borne infections.

## What happens if chlamydia is left untreated?

- Untreated chlamydia can spread to reproductive organs and cause sterility. It can also cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) or cause swelling and pain in the testicles and inflammation of the prostate.
- A pregnant woman with chlamydia may have a miscarriage. She could also pass chlamydia to her baby during childbirth.
- People who have chlamydia may be more likely to become infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).
- People who have both HIV and chlamydia are more likely to spread HIV to others.

## Who is at risk of getting chlamydia?

Anyone who is sexually active can get chlamydia. You are at greater risk of getting chlamydia if you:

- Are younger than 25 and sexually active with many partners.
- Have unprotected sex (vaginal, oral or anal) with an infected partner.
- Have sex with a sex worker.
- Have ever had an STI.

## How can chlamydia be prevented?

Individuals who are sexually active should:

- Limit the number of sexual partners and avoid sex with people whose sexual history is unknown.
- Always use condoms when having sex (vaginal, oral, or anal) or a dental dam (a sheet of latex).
- Avoid the use of alcohol and other drugs that might cloud thinking and lead to high-risk behavior.



## What is the public health response?

Contact your local sexual health clinic, or your primary care provider. Public Health recommends that all sexually active New Brunswickers are tested regularly for all sexually transmitted diseases at the same time. When you “test for one, test for all” you will be tested for gonorrhea, chlamydia, hepatitis, syphilis, the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and HIV/AIDS

If you are diagnosed with chlamydia, your health-care provider or a regional Public Health nurse may contact you to support you in contacting your partners.

All discussions are strictly confidential.

## Further Information

For additional information, contact your health-care provider, Tele-Care 811, local Public Health office or visit the government of New Brunswick STBBI website.