

## Fact Sheet

# Gonorrhoea.

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### What is Gonorrhoea

(Also known as "Clap", "Drip", "Jack", "A Dose")  
Gonorrhoea is an infection spread by sex. Both men and women can be infected.

In women, gonorrhoea can infect the neck of the uterus or womb (cervix).

In men, gonorrhoea can infect the inside of the penis (urethra).

The throat and rectum in either men or women can also be infected.

### How will you know if you have gonorrhoea?

Women may not notice any symptoms and may not realise they are infected. If symptoms do occur they may include:

- vaginal discharge
- pain in passing urine
- abnormal vaginal bleeding
- lower abdominal pain.

In men the symptoms usually appear between two and 10 days after sex with an infected person. Sometimes it takes longer. The first signs are:

- a burning sensation or irritation when passing urine
- a clear, thickish discharge (drip) from the penis. If not treated, the discharge may increase in amount and become thick, yellow and pus-like with an unpleasant smell.

Sometimes the symptoms are so slight a man may not notice them.



Men or women may have gonorrhoea of the throat or rectum. There may not be any symptoms.

### How can you be checked for gonorrhoea?

You can have a test done at any Sexual Health Clinic or by your own doctor.

### How do you get gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is easily spread by having unprotected sex with an infected person. Sex which places you at risk for gonorrhoea includes:

- penis - vagina sex
- penis - anus sex (anal sex)
- penis - mouth sex (oral sex)
- vagina - mouth sex (oral sex).

### What is the treatment for gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is treated with antibiotics (tablets and/or injections). It is important to treat it early before it can cause permanent damage.

### What happens if gonorrhoea is not treated?

#### Women:

If not treated it may lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) which is an infection of the womb, tubes and ovaries.

PID can lead to:

- infertility (making it harder to have babies)
- chronic pain
- an ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy which grows in the fallopian tube and can be dangerous).

Women can receive treatment for gonorrhoea during pregnancy

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### **Babies:**

Babies can catch gonorrhoea from their mother during birth. The bacteria can infect the baby's eyes.

### **Men:**

Men may develop inflammation of their upper genital tract. It can cause blockage (urethral stricture) and infection of the balls (epididymitis).

### **What about partners?**

Sexual partners who have vaginal, oral or anal sex without using a condom are at high risk of infection. All partners should be informed, and offered testing and treatment (remember the other person may not know they have gonorrhoea)

Telling a partner is not always easy. Sexual health counsellors can advise you on the best way to do this

### **How do you prevent gonorrhoea?**

Safer sex practices such as using condoms and dams, and limiting sex to cuddling, kissing or massaging will reduce the chances of catching gonorrhoea

What if I have more questions?

If you have any questions or worries please phone the clinic and ask to speak to a nurse or a counsellor

**We welcome further feedback on this brochure as a way of continually improving our service.**

### **Send your feedback to:**

WSLHD-Get\_Involved@health.nsw.gov.au