

# CHLAMYDIA

## FACT SHEET

### What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common bacterial infection that is easily spread through sexual contact. It is the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI) in Australia.

### What are the symptoms?

Most people do not have any symptoms and are unaware that they have the infection. Approximately 70% of women and 50% of men with the infection do not have any symptoms. If you have had unprotected sex you may have chlamydia.

In women, chlamydia can infect the cervix or urethra. Symptoms can include:

- pain when urinating
- discharge from the vagina
- pain in the lower abdomen
- pain or bleeding during or after sex
- bleeding between periods

In men, chlamydia can infect the urethra. Symptoms can include:

- pain when urinating
- discharge from the penis

In both sexes, chlamydia can infect the anus (there are usually no symptoms).

For women and men, if untreated chlamydia can affect your ability to have children, and may cause ongoing pelvic pain.

### How is chlamydia spread?

Chlamydia is easily spread during both vaginal and anal sex. Chlamydia can pass from the cervix to a baby at birth and cause an eye infection and/or pneumonia.

### When should I have a chlamydia test?

You should have a chlamydia test if:

- you have had unprotected sex with a new partner
- you have recently changed sexual partners
- you have more than one current sexual partner
- you have signs or symptoms of genital infection
- you have been diagnosed as having another STI, for example gonorrhoea, herpes or warts
- you have a sexual partner who has been diagnosed as having chlamydia or another STI
- you are under 30 years of age and have been sexually active

Remember, most people with chlamydia do not know they are infected. You can ask your doctor about a chlamydia test even if you are there for something else. Women having a Pap smear can ask for a chlamydia test at the same time.

### How is chlamydia tested?

Chlamydia is easily tested.

Men can be tested by a urine sample. The urine test is most accurate if it's done at least 2 hours after going to the toilet.

Women can have either a urine test or a swab taken from the cervix or vagina. This can be done by a self collected swab or as an extra test with a Pap test.

## How is chlamydia treated?

Chlamydia infection is treated with antibiotics prescribed by the doctor, usually as a single dose of 2 tablets.

It's important to avoid sexual intercourse for one week after treatment so that you don't pass on the infection or become reinfected yourself.

It is recommended that you have another test for chlamydia three months later to make sure you haven't been infected again.

Chlamydia is a notifiable STI. This means that the doctor has a legal requirement to notify the Department of Health of the chlamydia infection.

Any sexual partner/s from the last 6 months should be checked for STIs and be treated for chlamydia as well.

## Prevention of chlamydia

- Come prepared! Use condoms.
- Practise safer sex. Make sure semen, blood, vaginal or anal fluid are not passed between partners.
- Talk about any past infections with your sexual partner/s.
- Get tested!

## Where can I get tested?

- Make an appointment with your local doctor, health care provider, SHINE SA or Aboriginal Health service.
- Adelaide Sexual Health Centre: drop in or phone.  
275 North Terrace, Adelaide  
Tel: 7117 2800

**[www.getcheckednow.com.au](http://www.getcheckednow.com.au)**  
If you're 16–30, you can go online to arrange a free, confidential STI test, without seeing your doctor.

CONTACT  
SHINE SA

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### Clinic & Counselling Appointments and General Enquiries

Tel 1300 794 584

Clinic locations and times are available at [www.shinesa.org.au](http://www.shinesa.org.au)

### Sexual Healthline

Tel 1300 883 793 **Country callers (toll free)** 1800 188 171

Talk to a sexual health nurse about any sexual health issue.

Available 9am – 12.30pm, Monday – Friday

### National Relay Service

[www.relayservice.gov.au](http://www.relayservice.gov.au)

133 677 (TTY/Voice) 1300 555 727 (Speak & Listen) 0423 677 767 (SMS Relay)