



Hampton Park Women's Health Clinic

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Chlamydia

Chlamydia is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections. It is thought that up to one in ten sexually active young people have Chlamydia. If left untreated it can cause pelvic inflammatory disease, increase the risk of an ectopic pregnancy and infertility. If you are diagnosed with Chlamydia at the time of a surgical abortion then this can increase your chances of developing a pelvic infection after the surgery. It is vital that you take the antibiotics prescribed by the doctor to prevent this from occurring and to clear it from your body.

Chlamydia trachomatis is a bacteria, passed from one person to another through sexual contact (unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex) or sharing sex toys if you don't wash them or cover them with a new condom each time they are used. Chlamydia lives in the cells of the cervix, the urethra (the tube where urine comes out), the rectum and sometimes the throat and eye. Infected semen or vaginal fluid coming into contact with the eyes can cause conjunctivitis. Chlamydia can also be passed from pregnant women to her baby.

You cannot catch Chlamydia from kissing, hugging, sharing baths or towels, swimming pools or toilet seats. Many people infected with Chlamydia will have not have any obvious symptoms or be so mild they might go unnoticed. (70% of infected women do not have symptoms and 50% of infected men.) Symptoms in women include: pain when passing urine, an usual vaginal discharge, lower abdominal pain, pain or bleeding when you have sex, bleeding after sex, irregular bleeding between periods. Symptoms in men include: a white/cloudy discharge from the penis, pain when passing urine, possible pain in the testicles. As many people do not have symptoms it is often extremely difficult to know how long the Chlamydia has been present if prior testing has not been performed.

If you have been diagnosed with Chlamydia it is **very important that you discuss this with your sexual partner and any other possible past contacts**. We encourage your partner to see his local doctor to discuss treatment. You must both be treated otherwise there is a high chance that the untreated person will re-infect the treated person. It is essential that condoms are worn until the follow up tests demonstrate that you both have a negative result.

The follow up tests are usually performed four to five weeks after you have your antibiotics. They involve providing a urine specimen. The treatment is very effective (about 98% effective) and usually involves a single dose of two antibiotic tablets for yourself and your partner. Please notify the doctor if you are allergic to Erythromycin or Azithromycin. Please tell the doctor if you are breastfeeding or pregnant.

Chlamydia testing is very sensitive however it is possible to have the infection even when your test is negative so most doctors will treat the sexual partner of a diagnosed with Chlamydia. Once Chlamydia is diagnosed it is often important to perform further tests to assess for other sexually transmitted diseases. We advise speaking to your local doctor or booking a general appointment to discuss this.

If you are experiencing difficulty discussing this with your partner you may access the Let them Know website where you can send an anonymous and discreet text or email www.letthemknow.org.au/sms.html. Note: This website is closely monitored for misuse.