

Gonorrhea

1. What is gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by bacteria (germs). It is common among people aged 15-24. You can get it in your vagina, penis, rectum (butt), or throat. Gonorrhea can be cured with antibiotics. If left untreated, it can cause serious health problems, including difficulty getting pregnant and increasing your chances of getting HIV.

2. How is gonorrhea spread?

You can get gonorrhea by having unprotected vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has it. It's passed through contact with semen, vaginal fluids, or discharge. Gonorrhea can also be passed to a baby during childbirth.

3. What are the symptoms of gonorrhea?

Most people with gonorrhea don't have symptoms. When people have symptoms, they can be mild at first. Symptoms may show up right away or take up to 30 days after having sex with someone with gonorrhea.

If symptoms do appear, they may include:

- Pain or burning when you urinate (pee)
- Discharge from the vagina, penis, or anus that smells or looks strange
- Pain or bleeding from the rectum
- Bleeding from the vagina during or after sex
- Pain or swelling in one or both testicles
- Soreness or redness in the throat (rare)

4. How can I get tested?

To get tested for gonorrhea, go to a doctor or health clinic. There are free or low cost, confidential testing sites available around Los Angeles County. Visit www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/STDClinics.htm to find a local clinic. If you don't have a regular doctor, call the free STD hotline (800) 758-0880 to find free testing and treatment.

5. How is gonorrhea treated?

Gonorrhea can be treated and cured with medicine prescribed by your doctor. It's important to take all the medicine as instructed and don't share your medication with anyone unless instructed. Your doctor may give you medicine for your partner called "Patient Delivered Partner Therapy" (PDPT). Make sure both you and your sex partner(s) are treated before having sex again.

6. How can I prevent gonorrhea?

- Use a **condom** or **dental dam** every time you have sex.
- **Get tested** regularly in all the places (vagina, penis, rectum, throat) you have sex.
- **Limit your sex partner(s).**
- If you are **pregnant, seek early prenatal care** to prevent health problems for you and your baby.



Key Points

- Gonorrhea is very common, especially among people aged 15-24.
- Most people with gonorrhea don't have symptoms, but they can still spread it.
- Gonorrhea is curable and preventable.

For more information:

**Los Angeles County
Department of Public
Health**

www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/

**California Department of
Public Health**

www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CI/D/DCDC/Pages/Gonorrhea.aspx

**Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
(CDC)**

www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea/stdfact-gonorrhea.htm

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