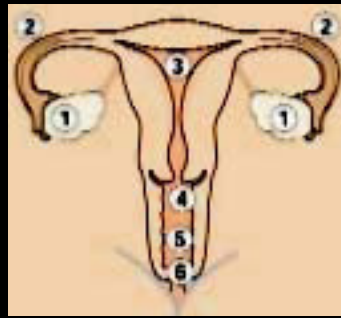


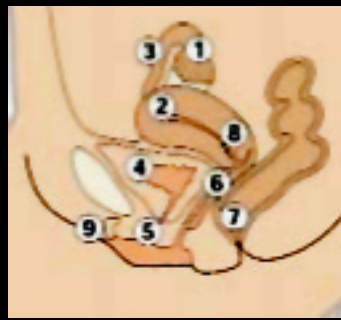
CHLAMYDIA

Chlamydia is a very common sexually transmitted infection (STI). There often aren't any symptoms, but if left untreated it can lead to infertility.



Woman's sexual organs (front)

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Ovaries | 4 Cervix |
| 2 Fallopian tubes | 5 Vagina |
| 3 Womb | 6 Entrance to vagina |



Woman's sexual organs (side)

- | | |
|-------------------|------------|
| 1 Ovary | 6 Vagina |
| 2 Womb | 7 Anus |
| 3 Fallopian tubes | 8 Cervix |
| 4 Bladder | 9 Clitoris |
| 5 Urethra | |



Men's sexual organs

- | | |
|-------------------|------------|
| 1 Scrotum | 7 Urethra |
| 2 Testicle | 8 Penis |
| 3 Vas deferens | 9 Foreskin |
| 4 Seminal vesicle | 10 Glans |
| 5 Bladder | 11 Anus |
| 6 Prostate gland | |

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Most women who are infected with chlamydia will have no symptoms but some may notice:

- A change in the normal discharge from the vagina.
- More frequent or painful peeing.
- Pain during sex.
- Bleeding between periods or irregular periods.

Men are more likely to notice symptoms, but some may have no symptoms at all. Those with symptoms may have:

- Discharge from the penis.
- Pain or burning when peeing.

The eyes can become infected with chlamydia and if they do, both men and women may experience painful swelling and irritation.

CHLAMYDIA

GETTING IT

You can get chlamydia in the following ways:

- Penetrative sex (where the penis enters the vagina or anus).
- Oral sex (from mouth to the genitals or genitals to the mouth).
- Mother to baby during birth.
- Occasionally by transferring the infection on fingers from the genitals to the eyes.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Chlamydia tests are often taken by using a pee sample, although samples may be taken from any infected place such as the cervix for women or the urethra (pee tube) for men. These are sent to a laboratory for testing and the results are usually available within a week. If the test is positive, the treatment for chlamydia is usually a simple one-off course of antibiotics.

You should avoid all sexual contact for at least one week after being treated. Check with your nurse, doctor or clinic. If you can, you should let anyone that you have had sexual contact with in the last 3 to 6 months know that they may have a sexually transmitted infection (STI) and that they need to be checked out and possibly tested. Staff at the clinic will offer you as much support as you need to do this.

A woman can pass on chlamydia to her baby if she has it at the time of birth. If this happens though, both baby and mother can be treated with antibiotics after birth.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS

In women, if not treated, chlamydia can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease, fertility problems, ectopic pregnancy (where the baby grows outside the womb) and chronic pelvic pain. The more times that you get chlamydia the higher your chances of not being able to have a baby (even if treated) and the more people you have sex with, the more likely you are to get it.

If left untreated, there is evidence to suggest that chlamydia may affect men's fertility as well.

If you think you may have chlamydia, contact your local NHS sexual health clinic (also known as a GUM clinic) and make an appointment. It's easy and completely confidential.

For more information on sexual health (including HIV), call the Sexual Health Line free (from the UK) on 0800 567 123, textphone (for people with hearing impairments) 0800 521 361 or phone your local NHS sexual health clinic.