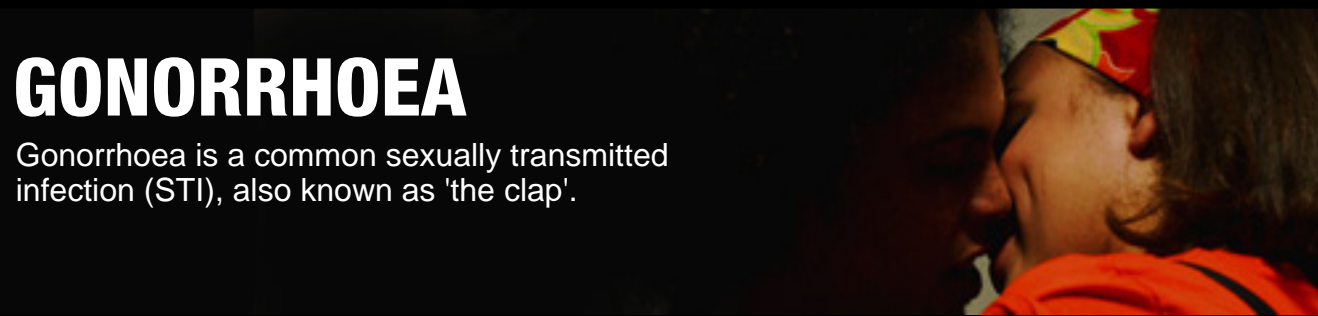


GONORRHOEA

Gonorrhoea is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI), also known as 'the clap'.



		<p>Woman's sexual organs (front)</p> <table border="0"> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 Ovaries</td> <td>4 Cervix</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Fallopian tubes</td> <td>5 Vagina</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Womb</td> <td>6 Entrance to vagina</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	1 Ovaries	4 Cervix	2 Fallopian tubes	5 Vagina	3 Womb	6 Entrance to vagina						
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		<p>Woman's sexual organs (side)</p> <table border="0"> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 Ovary</td> <td>6 Vagina</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Womb</td> <td>7 Anus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Fallopian tubes</td> <td>8 Cervix</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 Bladder</td> <td>9 Clitoris</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 Urethra</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	1 Ovary	6 Vagina	2 Womb	7 Anus	3 Fallopian tubes	8 Cervix	4 Bladder	9 Clitoris	5 Urethra			
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SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

It is possible, although rare, to be infected with gonorrhoea and have no symptoms. It is easier to spot for men than women, as symptoms are more noticeable in a penis than a vagina.

Women - symptoms may include:

- A change in vaginal discharge. This may increase, change to a yellow or greenish colour and it might smell different.
- A pain or burning sensation when peeing.
- Irritation and/or discharge from the anus.
- A sore throat - if infected there.

GONORRHOEA

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS (cont')

Men - symptoms may include:

- A yellow or green discharge from the penis.
- Irritation and/or discharge from the anus.
- Inflammation of the testicles and prostate gland.
- A sore throat - if infected there.

GETTING IT

Gonorrhoea is passed on by:

- Penetrative sex (when the penis enters the vagina or anus).
- Oral sex (from mouth to the genitals or genitals to the mouth).

And less often by:

- Rimming (where a person uses their mouth and tongue to stimulate another person's anus).
- Inserting your fingers into an infected vagina, anus or mouth and then putting them into your own without washing your hands in between.
- Sharing vibrators or other sex toys.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

A doctor or a nurse at your local sexual health (GUM) clinic will take a sample using a cotton wool or spongy swab or a small plastic loop from any places which may be infected - the cervix, urethra (pee tube), anus or throat. A sample of pee may be taken.

Results take about a week to come through, but if a doctor or nurse thinks you have gonorrhoea, you will be treated immediately with antibiotics. These may be tablets or an injection. Treatment is essential.

You should avoid all sexual contact until you are given the all clear by the doctor or nurse at the clinic. If you can, you should let anyone that you have had sexual contact with in the last 3 - 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 gonorrhoea to her baby if infected at the time of birth. However, treatment with antibiotics when the baby is born is easy and straightforward.

GONORRHOEA

LONG-TERM EFFECTS

If left untreated, gonorrhoea can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease in women. This can cause fever, pain and can lead to infertility or ectopic pregnancy (where the baby begins to grow outside the womb) or giving birth to the baby early.

In men, if left untreated, it can lead to inflammation inside the testicles and prostate gland and may affect fertility.

If you think you may have gonorrhoea, contact your local sexual health (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.