



Gonorrhoea

What is Gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is caused by a bacterium, *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, which can infect the mucous membranes of the urethra, cervix, anus, throat and eyes.

How is it transmitted?

Gonorrhoea is readily spread by anal, vaginal or oral sex without condoms.

How long until symptoms develop?

The majority of men develop symptoms within 1-3 days. If women develop symptoms, they seem to do so within 10 days.



What are the signs and symptoms?

Men:

Some men, especially those with anal or throat Gonorrhoea, do not have any signs or symptoms.

When symptoms occur they usually include:

- Thick, yellow or white discharge from the penis
- Pain or discomfort passing urine
- Redness around the opening of the penis.
- Anal discharge and discomfort

Women:

Most women do not have any signs or symptoms. When symptoms occur they may include:

- Unusual vaginal discharge
- Irregular bleeding.
- Discomfort passing urine
- Pelvic pain, especially during intercourse.

If left untreated, Gonorrhoea can spread to the uterus and tubes causing Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID), a condition that causes infertility.



How do you test for Gonorrhoea?

We test for Gonorrhoea by taking a swab from the urethra in men and the cervix in women. Swabs may also be taken from the throat and anus. It can also be tested using a first pass urine sample. The tests can usually detect Gonorrhoea within 2-4 days of coming into contact with the infection.

How is Gonorrhoea treated?

Gonorrhoea can be treated very effectively with oral antibiotics such as azithromycin. At the HKSHC, we usually prescribe oral doses of azithromycin and an injection of ceftriaxone.

How long does it take the symptoms to go away after treatment?

The symptoms will usually start to ease in a day or so. If you are still having symptom after a week, you should return for a review.

When is it safe to have sex again?

To give the antibiotics time to work, you should use condoms or not have sex for one week after finishing your treatment.

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Do I need further tests after I've been treated?

Yes. To check that you haven't been re-infected with Gonorrhoea, we suggest you have a repeat test 1 week after completing the treatment.

Should my sexual partners also be treated?

Yes. If you are treated for Gonorrhoea but a sexual partner is not, you could get infected again. It is extremely important to tell all your recent sexual partners that you have been diagnosed with Gonorrhoea and ask them to be tested and treated. If you have difficulty telling your partners, we have letters you can send to them, or trained staff who can do this for you without telling anyone your name.

How do I avoid getting infected again?

Make sure sexual partners get tested and treated for Gonorrhoea. Practicing safe sex by always using condoms is the best way to prevent further infections.



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This fact sheet is designed to provide you with information on Gonorrhoea. It is not intended to replace the need for a consultation with your doctor. All clients are strongly advised to check with their doctor about any specific questions or concerns they may have. Every effort has been taken to ensure that the information in this pamphlet is correct at the time of printing, June 2007.

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