

About Marie Stopes International

Marie Stopes International is a specialist reproductive healthcare organisation and a registered charity, working in both the UK and overseas.

Our nine main UK centres help over 100,000 women and men each year with abortion, sterilisation, contraception and health screening... but the good work does not stop here.

Any financial surplus generated in the UK helps us provide reproductive healthcare services to women and their families in some of the poorest communities in the world.

The organisation campaigns for better awareness of sexual health issues and open access to services for everyone. Our aim is to provide a high quality service, tailored to individual need. Whichever service you require, we offer convenient appointments and experienced teams who are supportive and professional.

For information about chlamydia & results:

Telephone 0845 120 3641 – 24 hours

Online chlamydia results service:

www.mariestopes.org.uk/resultsonline

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A5/rev0/LD/6_08

chlamydia

what is it?



MARIE STOPES
INTERNATIONAL

chlamydia – what is it?

Chlamydia is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections (STI's), it is a bacterial infection that is found in semen and vaginal fluids. Up to one in ten sexually active young people have chlamydia but it can affect anyone. At Marie Stopes International we advise all women and men to have a simple test to check for infection.

- Chlamydia often has no symptoms at all – it is frequently referred to as the 'silent infection'
- It can be passed on by having sex with someone who is infected
- If you have an existing chlamydia infection, for women, a procedure like an IUD (coil) fitting or abortion, can cause a flare up of the infection
- Having a chlamydia test is easy – a simple urine or swab test is all that is needed
- Positive results are treated with a short course of antibiotics

Why is chlamydia important to me?

Think about the following questions:

- **Are you sexually active?**
- **Have you had more than one sexual partner?**
- **Has your partner had more than one sexual partner?**

If you answered yes to any of those questions then you are at risk. Everyone who has sex is at risk of chlamydia.

It is not true that only people who sleep around are at risk of sexually transmitted infections – anyone can be unlucky and chlamydia is easy to pass on. Most people will not have any symptoms.

- Having different partners increases the risk
- Using condoms reduces the risk

Having a test is often the only way of knowing if you have chlamydia.

How will I know if I have chlamydia?

Although many people have no symptoms, women should definitely be tested if they have:

- Pain low in the abdomen
- Painful sex or bleeding after sex
- Unusual vaginal discharge
- The need to go to the toilet more often
- Pain when going to the toilet

Men should also be checked if they have:

- Pain when going to the toilet
- Painful testicles
- Discharge from the tip of the penis

Risks of not being tested for chlamydia:

- Pelvic inflammatory disease
- Ectopic pregnancy – a dangerous condition where pregnancy happens outside the womb
- Infertility

Chlamydia can also cause infertility in men.

What does the test involve?

At Marie Stopes International centres, all you have to do is provide a urine sample or have a swab test.

Where else can my partner and I be tested?

Your local GUM Clinic (Genito – Urinary Medicine) will provide testing for chlamydia and other possible infections. You can look them up in the phone book (usually under clinics) or call NHS Direct on 0845 4647. Your GP and local pharmacy may also be able to carry out the test.

What is the treatment?

Chlamydia is easily treated with antibiotics but you must take all the tablets as directed.

Your partner needs treating too!

If you have chlamydia, your partner almost certainly will too. They must take a test to make sure and get treatment if needed. Your partner can also be tested at Marie Stopes International.

Many people are worried or embarrassed about talking to their partner about a sexually transmitted infection, but as chlamydia is so common either of you may have been infected before you met.

If your partner does not have treatment at the same time as you do, the next time you have sex, you will probably get chlamydia again.

Do not forget to ask us if you have any questions about chlamydia no matter what they are.