

## What You Should Know About ...

# Chlamydia

See Glossary section for definitions of underlined words.

### What is Chlamydia?

- Chlamydia (Kla-mid-ee-ah) is a serious but very common sexually transmitted infection.
- It can spread silently and may not be noticed if you aren't tested.
- Chlamydia can cause lots of health problems if not treated.
- Both men and women can have Chlamydia.
- You can get Chlamydia from oral, anal or vaginal sex.

### What are the symptoms?

- Some people may have symptoms, and some may not.
- If you have symptoms, they usually appear one to three weeks after sex with an infected person.

### Women may experience:

- A new or different discharge from the vagina
- Burning feeling when you urinate (or pee)
- Vaginal bleeding in between periods
- Vaginal bleeding after sex
- Pain in your stomach (abdomen), with or without fever and chills
- Pain during sex
- No symptoms.

### Men may experience:

- A milky or watery drip coming from your penis
- Burning feeling when you urinate (or pee)
- Pain or swelling in the testicles
- An itchy feeling inside your penis
- No symptoms.

### Why is it important to get tested for Chlamydia?

- You can spread the infection without knowing you have it.
- In women it can cause a painful, long-term condition called Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID). This can make you sterile (not able to have babies).

### How do I get tested?

- Ask your health care provider for a test.
- Ask for a test at any time, but especially if you are about to start a new sexual relationship. Ask for a test for both partners.
- Women will have a swab (Q tip) that takes a sample from their cervix. Men will have a urine test or a swab from their penis.

## What if I have Chlamydia?

- See a health care provider for treatment.
- Chlamydia is treated with antibiotics.
- Do not drink alcohol while taking antibiotics or for one week after taking antibiotics.
- Do not have sex until you and your partner(s) are cured.

## Where can I get more information?

- From your health care provider, community health clinic, or public health nurse.
- From the Facts of Life On-Line: e-mail your questions to [thefactsoflife@serc.mb.ca](mailto:thefactsoflife@serc.mb.ca).

## Glossary:

**Discharge** – The release of any substance from anywhere on the body.

**Pelvic inflammatory diseases (PID)** – An infection of the uterus, the fallopian tubes or ovaries, which is caused by bacteria. It can lead to infertility if left untreated. Early treatment of PID is the most effective way to prevent infertility and other complications.

**Penis** – The external male sex organ, used for urination (peeing) and sexual intercourse.

**Testicles/Testes** – The two egg-shaped organs that hang below a man's penis in the scrotum (the sac of skin that holds the testicles). Sperm is produced in the testes.

**Vagina** – The muscular tube inside a woman's body where the menstrual blood comes out from the uterus, where a baby comes out from the uterus during childbirth, and where a penis can go in for vaginal intercourse.