

# GONORRHEA FACT SHEET

## What is Gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI). Gonorrhea is caused by a bacteria, neisseria gonorrhoea. Men and women can be infected with it, sometimes without symptoms. Most gonorrhea infections are treatable and curable with antibiotics. If left untreated, gonorrhea may lead to more serious infections or infertility.

## How do you get Gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is transmitted in multiple ways including through vaginal, anal, or oral sex when a person's mucous membranes come into contact with the infected genital secretions (vaginal fluids, semen, pre-ejaculate) of another person. Gonorrhea may also be transmitted from an infected woman to her newborn during childbirth. For HIV positive persons, gonorrhea can increase the amount of HIV present in genital fluid secretions.

## Symptoms

Gonorrhea may be asymptomatic (without symptoms) in both men and women. However, when symptoms are present they may take up to several weeks to appear. Symptoms often appear earlier in men than in women. Common symptoms for men and women include:

- pain or discomfort with urination or bowel movements
- pain or discomfort during or following sex
- rectal pain, itching, discharge or bleeding

<p>Additional symptoms for <b>women</b> may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• abnormal vaginal discharge ( color, odor, and/or texture)</li> <li>• abnormal bleeding with cramping</li> <li>• pelvic pain</li> <li>• spotting (bleeding) between periods</li> </ul>	<p>Additional symptoms for <b>men</b> may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• penile or rectal discharge (may be yellow, green, or white in color)</li> <li>• frequent urination</li> <li>• swollen penis or testes</li> </ul>
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Symptoms of gonorrhea are often mild in woman and go unnoticed until they progress to more serious infections such as pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) - an infection associated with abdominal pain, tissue scarring, and possible infertility. If left untreated in men, gonorrhea may lead to epididymitis - an infection associated with swollen testes, fever, tissue scarring, and possible infertility.

## Treatment

Gonorrhea is often curable with antibiotic treatment. However, it is worth noting that medication will only cure the infection, yet will not repair any permanent damage caused by gonorrhea. Recently there has been an increase in antibiotic resistant strains of gonorrhea making treatment more difficult. If symptoms persist a few days into antibiotic treatment, you may have an antibiotic resistant strain of gonorrhea and should go back to your medical provider for further evaluation and a new treatment plan. It is important to complete all gonorrhea medication even if symptoms are no longer present and to remain abstinent during the full course of treatment. Any sex partners should complete treatment before you resume having sex. After completing treatment for gonorrhea, patients are to return for re-testing in 3 months. At the Tang Center follow-up testing may be able to be ordered at the time of your initial diagnosis, depending on your risk factors.

## Partner Notification and Treatment

Testing positive for gonorrhea it is not the end of the world. However, infected persons should inform all vaginal, anal, and/or oral sex partners within the past 2 months. Sharing your status will help reduce your risk of re-infection. In an effort to reduce further transmission and encourage early treatment, Tang Center providers can provide treatment for infected partners if they are unable to access medical care. Discuss this with your medical provider . Partner treatment is not covered by SHIP.

Check our website: [www.uhs.berkeley.edu](http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu) to learn more about this medical concern or others.

For an appointment: [www.uhs.berkeley.edu](http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu) or call **510-642-2000** For Advice: call **Clinic Nurse 510-643-7197**

### Prevention

The only way to completely prevent gonorrhea infections is by abstaining from vaginal, anal, and/or oral sex. If you are sexually active you can decrease the risk of gonorrhea infection by:

- using condoms properly during vaginal and anal sex, and mouth to penis sex
- using dental dams properly during mouth to vulva, or mouth to anus sex
- getting tested for STIs regularly (every 6 - 12months) and encouraging partners to do the same
- communicating your results and status to current and future partner(s)
- reducing your number of sex partners

### Additional STI Testing Recommendations

Gonorrhea infections often occur with chlamydia or other sexually transmitted infections. Therefore, it is generally recommended that persons who test positive for gonorrhea strongly consider getting a full STD panel. If you're not sure what you should be tested for, your medical provider can help you determine which tests would be appropriate based on any symptoms you may be experiencing as well as any risk factors you may have.

### Gonorrhea Resources

<u>Tang Center</u>	<u>Online</u>
<p><b>Clinical Health Education:</b> 642-2000 Free 60-minute health coaching session with a professional health educator to talk about a personal STI prevention plan, how to make safer sex fun, sexual communication, etc. All genders and orientations welcome.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea/stdfact-gonorrhea.htm">www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea/stdfact-gonorrhea.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Advice Nurse:</b> 643-7197 Ask a medical question or find out if you need an appointment. Open Monday - Friday, 8AM - 4:30PM.</p>	<p><b>Tang Center:</b> Information on resources, various health topics, and medical services. <a href="http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu">http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu</a></p>
<p><b>Medical Appointment:</b> 642-2000 Get an STI test or meet with a clinician. Appointments available Monday - Friday, 8AM-12PM and 1-4:30PM.</p>	<p><b>Sexual Health Education Program (SHEP): 642-3620</b> Trained peer educators are happy to talk with you about sexual health via social media, workshops for your student groups, and more! Interactive safer sex supply map and Q&amp;A available online. <a href="http://sheptalk.wordpress.com/">http://sheptalk.wordpress.com/</a></p>
<p><b>Urgent Care:</b> 642-3188 Urgent care sees students for immediate problems and symptoms. Open Monday - Friday, 8AM-6PM, and Saturday 9AM-5PM during Fall and Spring semesters and Monday-Friday 8AM-4:30PM (no Saturdays) during Summer.</p>	<p><b>San Francisco City Clinic:</b> STD Information and basics chart depicting potential STD risk based on behaviors. <a href="http://sfcityclinic.org/stdbasics/stdchart.asp">http://sfcityclinic.org/stdbasics/stdchart.asp</a></p>
	<p><b>Planned Parenthood:</b> Information on safer sex, contraception, STIs, sexuality, and more. <a href="http://www.plannedparenthood.org">http://www.plannedparenthood.org</a></p>

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