

Information for Sex Partners of Persons with Chlamydia and/or Gonorrhea



PLEASE READ CAREFULLY: THIS IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR SEXUAL HEALTH

Your sex partner has recently been treated for chlamydia, gonorrhea or both. These are sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), also called sexually transmitted infections (STIs). You get these from having any kind of sex (oral, vaginal, or anal) with a person who already has the infection, so there is a good chance you have the infection too. You are being given medicine or a prescription to clear your infection(s). Your partner may have given you the actual medicine, or a prescription that you can take to a pharmacy (drug store). It is important that you follow all directions from the healthcare professional (doctor, nurse) and read all information that comes with your prescription or with the medicine.

What is Expedited Partner Therapy?

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) lets healthcare professionals give extra medicine or a prescription to patients who have an STD to give to their sex partner(s). This lets partners start to take medicine to clear the infection as soon as possible if they are not able to see a healthcare provider right away.

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common STD (also called an STI) that you can get from having oral, anal, or vaginal sex with someone who has chlamydia. Most people who have chlamydia do not have signs or symptoms. If a person does have symptoms, these might include pain or burning when peeing, or pus or discharge from the penis, vagina, and/or anus. Even without symptoms, chlamydia can be passed to sex partners and cause serious health problems. Some of these problems might be infertility (not being able to get pregnant/get someone pregnant), pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), or ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outside the womb). Getting treated for chlamydia can stop these health problems from happening and also helps stop the spread of this infection.

What is gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is another common STD that you can get from having oral, anal, or vaginal sex with someone who has gonorrhea. Most people who have gonorrhea do not have signs or symptoms. Symptoms of gonorrhea infection in the genitals might include pain or burning while peeing, pus or discharge from the penis or vagina, vaginal bleeding between periods, or painful or swollen testicles. Symptoms of rectal (anal) infection might include anal discharge, itching, soreness, or bleeding. A symptom of oral (mouth) infection may be a sore throat. Even without symptoms, gonorrhea can be passed to sex partners and cause serious health problems like infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), ectopic pregnancy, or epididymitis (swollen testicles). Gonorrhea can also spread to the blood and joints, which can be life-threatening. Getting treated for gonorrhea can stop these health problems from happening and also helps stop the spread of this infection.

What should I do now?

Find medical care. The best way to cure this infection is to see a healthcare professional (such as a doctor or nurse) right away. If you cannot get to your provider in the next several days, you should take the medicine given to you or prescribed for you. Even if you do take the medicine, it is still very important to see a healthcare professional as soon as you can to get tested for other STDs, including HIV. People can have more than one STD at the same time. This medicine will not cure other STDs that you might also have.

Read all the information given to you. It is important to read all the information given to you about EPT and the medicine(s) given or prescribed to you before taking it. If you have any questions or concerns, contact a healthcare professional. If you are pregnant or have other health issues, you should consult a healthcare professional before taking any medicine.

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Take all your medication. It is important to take all medicine either given to you or prescribed for you to fully cure the infection(s). Do not have sex (oral, anal, or vaginal) until your healthcare professional tells you it is ok to have sex (this usually is seven days after you take your medicine). If you have sex too soon, you can still pass an infection to your partners even if they already have been cured. If you have symptoms that do not go away after seven days, contact your healthcare professional right away.

Inform all your recent sexual partner(s). It is very important that all your recent sexual partners also get tested and treated for STDs. This is so that they do not get sick, pass the infection to others, or re-infect you. This means anyone with whom you have had oral, anal, or vaginal sex in the past 60 days. If it has been more than 60 days since you have had oral, anal or vaginal sex, tell the last person(s) with whom you had sex. Explain that you have been exposed to an STD and that they may have been exposed as well.

Reduce your risk for getting or passing STDs. STDs are very common. Most sexually active people will get one at some point in their life. The only way to completely avoid getting or passing an STD, including HIV, is to not have oral, anal, or vaginal sex. If you do have sex, some ways that you can lower the chance of getting or passing an STD are:

- Using a latex barrier, such as a condom, the right way every time you have sex (oral, anal, and vaginal)
- Limiting the number of people with whom you have sex.

Some STDs are lifelong conditions but can be managed very well with medicine or treatments that keep you healthy and make it unlikely that you will pass the infection during sex.

What if I do not have signs or symptoms?

Some people infected with chlamydia and gonorrhea have symptoms, but most do not. Many people do not know they are infected because they feel fine. But the infection can still lead to serious health issues and can still be spread to others. If you do not have symptoms, you should still get tested and still take medicine. Taking the medicine can cure the infection, even if you do not have symptoms.

What if I might be pregnant?

If there is a chance you are pregnant, it is very important that you contact your healthcare provider before taking this or any medicine. It is also important to get tested for other STDs, which can be passed to a baby during pregnancy or delivery.

What should I expect when I go to the pharmacy (drug store) to pick up the medicine?

The pharmacist may ask for some information such as name, address, date of birth, and form of payment (insurance, co-payment, self-pay). They may also ask about allergies to medications and medical conditions to make sure the medicine is safe for you to take. Any cost for the medicine that is not covered by health insurance will need to be paid by the person receiving the medicine.

Where can I find out how to get health insurance or free/low cost medical care and medications in New Jersey?

Information about health insurance plans and financial help for medical needs can be found at <https://nj.gov/getcoverednj/> or by calling 1-833-677-1010. To find free and low-cost STD testing and treatment, contact your local health department. You can find contact information for your local health Department at <https://www.nj.gov/health/lh/>.

To find a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that provides free or low-cost healthcare, visit <https://www.nj.gov/health/fhs/primarycare/fqhc/>.

What if I have more questions about EPT or STDs?

You can get more information about STDs from your healthcare professional, and by visiting the website of the STD Program of the New Jersey Department of Health at <https://www.nj.gov/health/hivstdtb/stds/>.