

## What is Gonorrhea (gon-o-RHEE-a)?

- Gonorrhea is an infection you can get in your vagina, penis, anus or throat.
- Many people with Gonorrhea do not have any signs or symptoms.
- When people do have symptoms, they can be mild at first.

### **You may have some of these symptoms:**

- Pain or burning when you urinate (pee)
- Fluid from the vagina, penis, or anus that smells or looks strange
- Bleeding from the vagina during or after sex
- Pain or tingling in the penis
- Pain in the lower belly or back, especially when having sex (women)
- A fever

## Is Gonorrhea serious?

### **Yes! If you don't get treated:**

- It may be impossible to get pregnant or have babies later on.
- You may pass Gonorrhea to people you have sex with.
- You can pass it to your baby during birth.
- You may feel pain in your lower belly during sex for months or even years. (women)
- You may have pain and swelling in your testicles.
- It can cause you to have a pregnancy that grows outside of your uterus, which can cause death.
- It can spread to your blood and joints.
- You may get other diseases more easily, like HIV.

## How did I get Gonorrhea?

- You got it by having vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has it.
- Most people don't know they have it and you can't tell if someone has it by looking at them.
- Getting tested is the only way to find out if you have it.

## What should I do now?

### **Gonorrhea can be cured if you follow these 3 important steps:**

1. Take all of the medicine your doctor or nurse gives you.
2. Make sure ALL of your sex partners from the past 2 months get medicine for Gonorrhea as soon as possible.
3. Don't have sex until 7 DAYS AFTER both you and your sex partner(s) finish the medicine.  
→ If you do have sex before 7 days, use a condom.

**If you don't follow all of these steps, you can get Gonorrhea AGAIN and it can be worse!**

## Many people who get Gonorrhea GET IT AGAIN:

**Get tested again in 3 months!**

- Having Gonorrhea once will NOT protect you from getting it again.
  - Getting another infection with Gonorrhea is really common.
  - Getting infected with Gonorrhea again can cause a lot more harm inside your body.
  - Most of the time there are no symptoms when you get Gonorrhea again.
- It is really important to come back to **get tested again in 3 months.**

### **Remember! It is also very important to:**

- Return to the clinic if your symptoms don't go away within a few days.
- Use a condom every time you have sex so you don't get Gonorrhea again.

# Gonorrhea

## What should I know about my treatment?

### DO NOT HAVE SEX UNTIL 7 DAYS AFTER YOU AND YOUR PARTNER(S) FINISH THE MEDICINE

You have been given the medicine checked below:

- Ceftriaxone** (by shot given in the clinic)
- Cefixime**       **Cefpodoxime**

Take all of this medicine at once, as soon as you get it.

AND, you may also have been given:

- Azithromycin**

Take all of this medicine at once, as soon as you get it.

- Doxycycline**

- Take 1 pill in the morning and 1 pill at night for 7 days.
- DO NOT take this medication if you think you may be pregnant or if you are nursing.
- Take this medicine with food or milk if it upsets your stomach.
- You can be easily sunburned while on this medication.

### What are the possible side-effects of treatment?

If you have either of these problems, **call 911 right away**:

- Wheezing
- Trouble breathing

If you have any of these problems, **please call the clinic**:

- A skin rash or bumps
- Itching
- Vomiting (throwing up)

### WHAT IF I'M PREGNANT?

- If you think you are pregnant, tell the doctor or nurse before you take any medicine.
- Tell the doctor you are seeing for your pregnancy that you have tested positive for Gonorrhea.
- If you are keeping the pregnancy, you will need to get tested again for Gonorrhea in **3 to 4 weeks**. This is to make sure that you are cured.
- If you do not get treated, you can pass Gonorrhea to your baby while giving birth. This can cause serious eye, joint, or blood infections in your baby.

## What about my sex partner(s)?

There are many ways to make sure your sex partners get medicine for Gonorrhea. Here are some of them:

- Bring your partner into clinic with you when you come in for treatment.
- Ask your doctor or nurse for extra medicine to take to your partner(s).
- Ask your partner(s) to go to their own doctor to get medicine.
- Go to the website [www.inspot.org](http://www.inspot.org) to send an email telling your partner(s) they may have Gonorrhea – you can do this without giving your name.

## What else do I need to know?

- Gonorrhea is a very common sexually transmitted infection (STI).
- Many people infected with Gonorrhea are *also* infected with Chlamydia.
- Many people with Gonorrhea do not have any symptoms:
  - If you do have symptoms, they can show up right away or as long as 30 days after having sex with someone who has Gonorrhea.
- Once you've had Gonorrhea, there is a very high chance of getting it again. You might get it again:
  - If you have sex with someone who did not get treated, or
  - If you have sex too soon after you and your sex partner(s) finish the medicine, or
  - If you have sex with a new partner who has it.
- You can have Gonorrhea and other STIs at the same time.

Portions of this form were adopted from the California Department of Public Health, Office of Family Planning: *Gonorrhea-What You Need To Know (OF4074)*, retrieved from <http://www.familypact.org>