

Chlamydia: What You Don't Know May Hurt You

Three million women get chlamydia each year and most of them are under the age of 25. Take a few minutes and test your chlamydia knowledge. You might be surprised by what you don't know.

1. Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted disease (STD) in the U.S.

True False

Answer: True. Chlamydia is the most common and treatable STD in the U.S. Half of all people between 18 and 30 years of age are infected.

2. You would know if you have chlamydia because of the symptoms.

True False

Answer: False. As many as $\frac{3}{4}$ of chlamydia infections in women and $\frac{1}{2}$ in men do not have symptoms. This is why many men and women don't even know that they have it and many unknowingly pass it to their sexual partners. This is also why it is so important that sexually active men and women get a chlamydia test.

3. When symptoms do occur in women, they can include:

- Vaginal discharge and itching
- Bleeding between periods'
- Nausea and fever
- Painful periods
- Abdominal pain
- All of the above

Answer: All of the above. Women who have any of these symptoms should call their doctor and get tested for chlamydia or other STDs right away.

4. Who should get tested for chlamydia?

- People who have had sex without using a condom
- People who are considering becoming involved with a new sexual partner
- People who are sexually active, but don't have vaginal sex
- All of the above

Answer: All of the above. Chlamydia is caused by bacteria transmitted during sexual contact, including oral and anal sex. Any sexually active person can get chlamydia and should be tested.

5. A Pap smear can test for chlamydia

True False

Answer: False: A Pap smear does not test for chlamydia. You must specifically ask for a separate chlamydia test which can be done during a pelvic exam. Your clinician can also find out if you have chlamydia with a special urine test, which does not require a pelvic exam.

6. Chlamydia can be easily treated

True False

Answer: True. Chlamydia is treated with antibiotics taken for 7-10 days.

(over)

7. It can be dangerous for women if chlamydia is left untreated

True False

Answer: True. As many as 4 out of every 10 women with untreated chlamydia develop pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a painful infection that can cause infertility. Babies can get chlamydia during birth if the mother is infected at the time of delivery. Also, a person who is infected with chlamydia is at least two to five times more likely to get HIV if they are exposed to the virus through sexual contact.

8. If a person is treated for chlamydia, but her partner isn't, she can be re-infected

True False

Answer: True. If you have chlamydia it's important to tell your partner so he can get tested and treated. (Chlamydia is rare in women whose only sexual partners are women.) If you are treated, but your partner isn't, you could be passing the infection back and forth to each other. If both of you are infected you should be treated at the same time.

9. A chlamydia infection can be prevented by

- a. Not having sex, including oral and anal sex
- b. Using a latex condom every time you have sex
- c. Limiting your sexual partners and asking your partner to do the same
- d. All of the above

Answer: All of the above.

How did you do?

5-9 Correct:

Congratulations! Your knowledge about chlamydia is very good. Being informed and getting tested for chlamydia if you're at risk are the best ways to stay healthy.

0-4 Correct:

While you may have correctly answered some of the questions, you could benefit from more information. For starters, talk to your doctor.

How can I learn about chlamydia?

- Ask your doctor or clinician
- Call the National STD and AIDS hotline at 1-800-342-2437 and 1-800-227-8922