

Patients' Guide to Gonorrhoea

What is gonorrhoea?

Gonorrhoea is a bacterial sexually transmitted infection (STI). It affects both men and women.

How is gonorrhoea passed?

- Sexual intercourse with an infected person (oral, vaginal, or anal sex)
- Mother-to-child (during normal childbirth)

What are the signs and symptoms?

An infected person may not have any signs or symptoms. If they are present, they may include the following.

In males:

- Urethral discharge (white/yellow/green)
- Burning pain or irritation when passing urine
- Rectal discharge (from anal sex)
- Sore throat or throat discomfort (from oral sex)

In females:

- Vaginal discharge (white/yellow/green)
- Pain when passing urine
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding
- Rectal discharge (from anal sex)
- Sore throat or throat discomfort (from oral sex)

For babies, they may have an eye infection which may cause blindness.

When do signs/symptoms appear?

Signs may show up 2–7 days (or longer) after infection. However, most throat and rectal infections do not cause symptoms, and infections in women often go unnoticed.

How is gonorrhoea diagnosed?

At DSC, we use culture and PCR tests.

- Swab sample — a sample will be taken with a blunt plastic swab stick from the affected area
- First catch urine flow

Who should get tested?

Those who are sexually active or have any symptoms as described above. However, one can have a test for gonorrhoea even if one has no signs or symptoms.

Gonorrhoea is also easily passed on between sexual partners, therefore both the infected person and their partner should be tested at the same time before further sexual activity.

NOTE: Those who show symptoms need to hold their urine for at least 4 hours before getting tested at the clinic to ensure the accuracy of the test results.

Can gonorrhoea cause other problems?

In **males**, it can cause a spread of infection to the testicles and sperm tubes, causing pain and swelling.

In **females**, it can cause infertility, and/or an infection in the womb and tubes, causing abdominal pain, damaged fallopian tubes, and ectopic (abnormal) pregnancy.

In **both males and females**, it may spread to the bloodstream, joints, skin, and heart.

How can gonorrhoea affect pregnancy?

Pregnant women may pass gonorrhoea to their baby during childbirth, causing serious eye infection and even blindness in the newborn.

Can gonorrhoea be treated?

Yes, gonorrhoea can be treated and cured with antibiotic injection and a course of oral antibiotics.

However, a cure may be difficult with the rise of drug-resistant gonorrhoea.

Do those with gonorrhoea need to return for follow-up visits?

Follow-up is important to allow doctors to ensure patients with gonorrhoea are cured.

If one has gonorrhoea, they are to return for a follow-up 14 days after the date of treatment for test of cure, and 3 months to get tested for syphilis and HIV.

If one had missed their follow-up appointment, DSC will follow up with them via phone or letter.

Important Notes on Gonorrhoea

- Seek immediate treatment from a doctor if you have symptoms.
- Should you have any drug allergies, do inform the doctor during your appointment.
- Repeat infections can happen as there is no permanent protection provided by a previous infection.
- Do not self-medicate as it will suppress signs of infections.
- Avoid sexual activity until the doctor has confirmed you are cured.

Practice safer sex

- Use condoms correctly and every time one has sex
- Avoid drinking excessive amounts of alcohol before or during sex, as this may impair your judgement.
- Have sex without an exchange of bodily fluids (e.g. semen or vaginal secretions).

Reach Out to Us

If you still have queries, feel free to call us at the following numbers:

HIV/STI Hotline (8am – 5pm)

1800 252 1324

Health Info Recorded Hotline (24 hours)

+65 6295 2944

Appointments

+65 6293 9648

You may also visit www.dsc-clinic.sg for more information, or find us at the DSC Clinic, 31 Kelantan Lane #01-16 S(200031).

Disclaimer

We have attempted to provide full, accurate, and up-to-date information in this patient information leaflet, based on current medical evidence and opinion. However, information and advice may vary from different sources and over time. If you have any further questions, do see your doctor or healthcare provider.

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