

Chlamydia, patient instructions

- Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis*.
- Chlamydia is the most common bacterium causing an STD.
- The incubation period from infection to the onset of possible symptoms is 1 to 3 weeks, but the majority of the infected are completely asymptomatic.
- Chlamydia infection is prevented through the use of condoms and dental dams. Especially in anal sex, it is also good to use either a water- or silicone-based lubricant. Chlamydia is more easily transmitted through broken mucous membranes.

Chlamydia is transmitted through

- vaginal and anal intercourse
- oral sex
- hands, when the hand touches the genitals or anus and then touches other genitals, anus or eyes.
- Asymptomatic chlamydia is equally contagious. An asymptomatic infection can only be diagnosed with a chlamydia test.

Symptoms

- Chlamydia is often asymptomatic.
- Symptoms of an inflammation of the cervix can include abnormal vaginal discharge or bloody vaginal spotting.
- Endometritis and an inflammation of the fallopian tubes can cause abdominal pain and irregular menstrual bleeding.
- A burning sensation when urinating, a need to urinate frequently
- Urethral discharge
- Epididymitis can cause swelling, redness and pain in the scrotum. A sore and swollen epididymis can be distinguished above the testicle.
- In the throat and anus, the infection is often asymptomatic.
- Chlamydia can be transmitted through secretions and hands to the eye, causing conjunctivitis.

Possible late complications and secondary diseases

- Pelvic inflammatory disease with fever often requires hospitalisation.
- Both epididymitis and pelvic inflammatory disease can cause infertility. Pelvic inflammatory disease can also increase the risk of ectopic pregnancy.
- Chlamydia can trigger reactive arthritis.

Examination and treatment

- Testing and treatment of chlamydia is free of charge in public healthcare.
- Chlamydia can be easily diagnosed with the help of a urine sample or a swab test taken from the vagina, urethra, throat, anus or cervical canal, depending on sexual preferences.
- Chlamydia and gonorrhoea are tested from the same sample. It is also recommended to have bloodwork done to check for other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Chlamydia is treated with a free-of-charge course of antibiotics. The medicine is given to the patient at the health station.
- Please tell your sex partners about your chlamydia infection so that they can seek medical attention and treatment.
 - If you are showing symptoms, inform your sex partners you have had during the symptoms and over a period of four weeks before you became symptomatic.
 - If you are asymptomatic, inform the sex partners you have had over a period six months before your diagnosis.
- The aim is to treat your regular sex partner at the same time as you. Treatment can be started immediately after sampling.
- Resampling is done one month after treatment to make sure you no longer have the disease.
 - A control sample taken too early can give a 'false' positive test result.
- **You must refrain from having sex until one week has passed from the start of treatment.**
- **After treatment, it is important to use a condom/dental dam until your check-up.**