



color



Cook County
DEPT. of
Public Health

Important Information About Chlamydia & Gonorrhea

Why is it important to get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?

Many STIs don't cause symptoms, so getting tested is the only way to know if you have an STI and need treatment.

Who should get tested for chlamydia and gonorrhea?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines recommend that you get screened annually for chlamydia and gonorrhea if you're sexually active. Testing is also recommended if any of the following circumstances apply:

- You have a sexual partner who has an STI
- You have a new sexual partner
- You have more than one sexual partner
- You have a sexual partner who has other partners
- You practice inconsistent condom use when not in a mutually monogamous relationship
- You have a previous or coexisting STI
- You have a history of exchanging sex for money or drugs

Is STI testing confidential?

Yes, STI results are kept confidential in accordance with applicable medical privacy laws. If you are tested today, a clinician will call you to discuss your results. As required by law, positive results are reported to your state health department.

How can I protect myself against STIs?

You can reduce your risk for getting an STI by using internal or external condoms and dental dams consistently and correctly. That means every time you have sex—oral, anal, and vaginal.

Which birth control method also protects against STIs?

Consistent and correct use of latex condoms reduces the risk of STI transmission. However, condom use cannot provide absolute protection against any STI.

How can I get tested for chlamydia and gonorrhea?

Chlamydia and gonorrhea can occur in the genitals, throat, or rectum. Color offers a free one- or three-sample self-test for chlamydia and gonorrhea. The one-sample test is a urine test that looks for infection in the urethra. The three-sample test is recommended for anyone who engages in oral and anal sex, and includes an anal swab, a mouth swab, and a urine sample. Testing for chlamydia and gonorrhea is typically quick and painless.

How does someone get an STI?

Anyone who is sexually active can get an STI. You can get an STI from oral, vaginal, or anal sex.

What happens if I test positive?

Both you and your sexual partner(s) should talk to a healthcare provider about treatment. If you test positive, a healthcare provider will contact you via phone the day your results are released (or Monday, if on the weekend) to discuss your treatment plan. Antibiotics (given by mouth or injection) may be recommended and in most cases can effectively treat chlamydia and gonorrhea. Also, your partners may be eligible to get a prescription for treatment without a test – ask your provider. It is important to complete treatment before having sex to ensure that you and your partner(s) are protected.

You'll also have the option to connect with a Color Care Advocate, who can help you to:

- Arrange for treatment and retesting (recommended after 3 months)
- Adhere to your treatment regimen
- Learn more about STIs

What happens if I don't get treated for chlamydia or gonorrhea?

If left untreated, STIs can have serious and long-term health consequences. Untreated chlamydia or gonorrhea can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, cervical cancer, and joint swelling. They can also increase the risk of getting HIV. For pregnant women, both chlamydia and gonorrhea can be passed to the baby during delivery.

To learn more, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's HIV/AIDS & STDs webpage: cdc.gov/std/hiv/default.htm

Cook County Department of Public Health is partnering with Color Health to offer free tests for chlamydia and gonorrhea for residents over the age of 18. To learn more, visit color.com/cookcounty