



ABOUT CHLAMYDIA

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) that affects people of all genders and ages. Having an STI does not define who you are—and getting tested and treated is a normal part of taking care of your health.

How does chlamydia spread?

- Spread through vaginal, anal, or oral sex with an infected partner.
- Can spread through close genital contact, even without penetration.
- Often has no symptoms, so people may spread it without knowing.
- Infection may occur in other areas of the body (vaginal, anal, throat) depending on sexual activity.
- Tell your doctor what types of sex you have so all necessary areas can be tested.

Get tested

- Testing is simple—usually requiring a urine test, but could also include vaginal, genital, rectal, and/or throat swabs.
- Regular screening is recommended, especially for sexually active people under age 25 or anyone with new or multiple partners.
- Be open with your healthcare provider about your sexual activities so they can test all relevant areas.

Get Free Testing & Condoms

Find testing sites
in Cook County



Request free
condoms



Cook County DEPT. of
Public Health

A division of Cook County Health

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Signs and symptoms

If you have a vagina, look for:

- Unusual vaginal discharge or odor
- Bleeding between periods or after sex
- Pain or burning when urinating
- Pelvic or abdominal pain, sometimes with fever or nausea

If you have a penis, look for:

- Clear or white discharge from the penis
- Pain or burning during urination
- Swollen or tender testicles

All genders, look for:

- Pain, discharge, or bleeding from the anus
- Sore throat (if infection is in the throat)

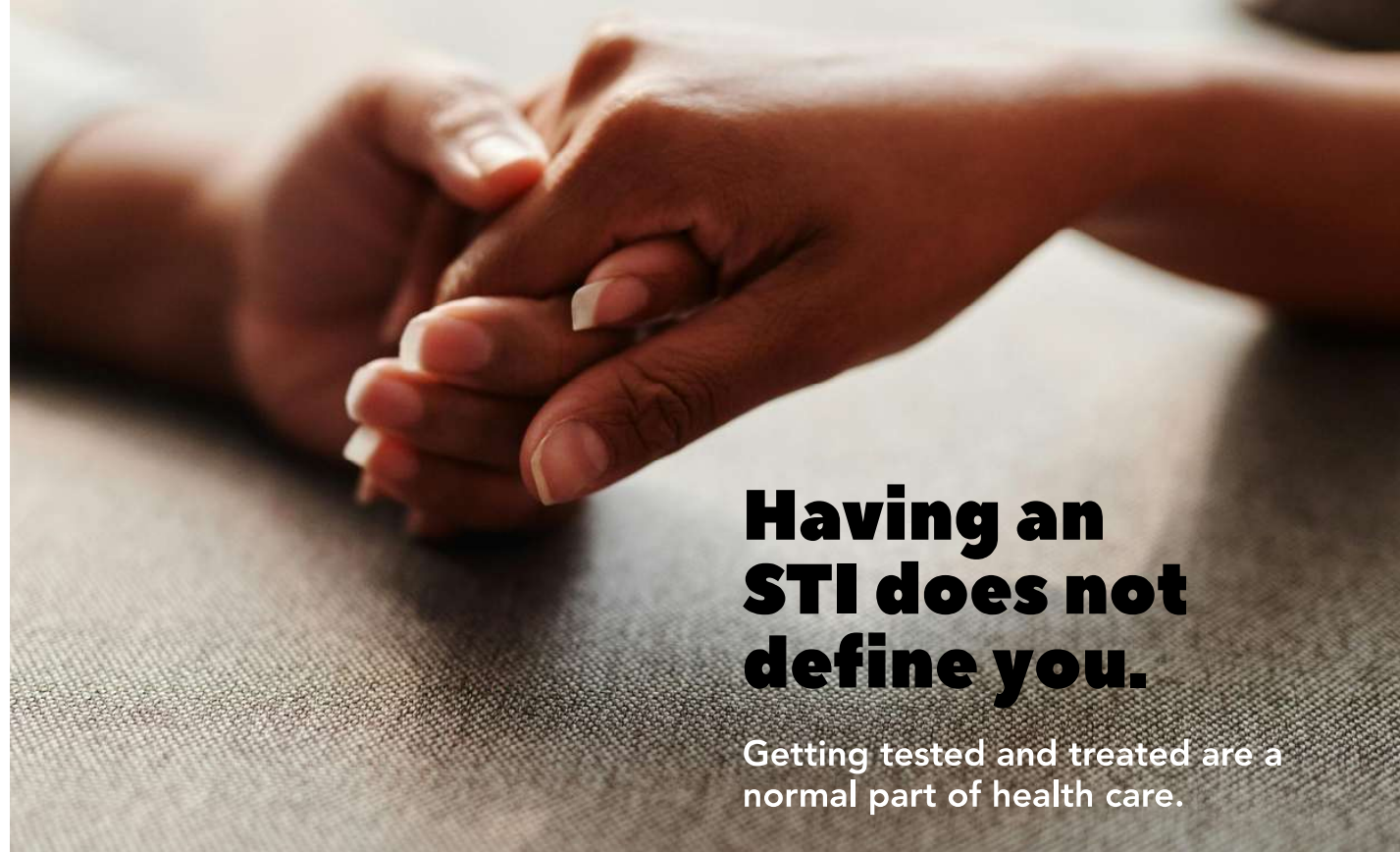
Why treatment matters

Without treatment, chlamydia can cause:

- Ongoing pelvic pain
- Fertility problems
- Complications during pregnancy or passing infection to a baby during birth
- Increased risk of getting or transmitting other STIs, including HIV

Get treated

- Chlamydia is easily treated with antibiotics.
- It's important to take all medication as prescribed, even if you feel fine.
- Your sexual partners also need testing and treatment to prevent reinfection.



Having an STI does not define you.

Getting tested and treated are a normal part of health care.

Protect yourself and others

- Use condoms or dental dams during vaginal, anal, and oral sex.
- Get tested regularly and encourage partners to do the same.
- Talk openly with partners and your doctor about STI prevention—it's part of healthy communication.
- Ask your doctor about additional protection and prevention options, such as expedited partner therapy (EPT), Doxy-PEP, PrEP, or nPEP, which can help reduce the risk of some infections, including HIV.
- Avoid sexual contact until you and your partner(s) have completed treatment.

If you test positive

If your test results are positive, your doctor is required to report it to the health department. This helps us connect with patients to make sure they get treated for their infection and prevent infections from spreading in the community.

Your personal information is protected under HIPAA regulations, and everything you share is kept strictly confidential.

You may receive a call from us to:

- Ensure you've been treated appropriately
- Provide you with more information
- Collect a brief sexual history and possible exposure timeline
- Help stop the infection from spreading in the community.