

You may not know you have it!...

choose chlamydia screening

What's all the fuss - is it such a big deal?

YES! Chlamydia is a big deal. It is the most common bacterial sexually transmitted infection (STI for short) in the UK.

BUT! The problem is that most people have no symptoms. So most of you wouldn't know you have it.

Chlamydia is a bacteria that affects the sex organs. If chlamydia is not treated the infection can spread to other parts of the body and cause pain, especially in the abdomen (lower stomach) and may cause infertility (being unable to have children). This risk is increased if you get infected again and again.

If you do get symptoms, these may show up 1-3 weeks after coming into contact with chlamydia, many months later or not until the infection spreads to other parts of your body. If you do get symptoms you might notice:

- unusual vaginal discharge
- pain when peeing or having sex
- bleeding after sex or between periods
- lower abdominal pain or painful testicles (balls)

If you have any of these see someone right away to check for an infection.

Even if you don't have symptoms, if you are under 25 years old and have ever had sex, you can have a simple, free test to check for chlamydia as part of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme.

What is the chlamydia test?

The test is simple and painless and totally voluntary – you can refuse.

If you do want to have the test, you will be asked to fill in a form – ask for help if you want. We must have a way of contacting you with your results. This can be your address, mobile number or e-mail. You do not have to answer all the questions on the request form, but it helps if you do.

We will not tell anyone about what you tell us. The Health Protection Agency counts how many people in England have chlamydia. We will send them details of the results **but not** your name or contact details.

The test: you will be asked to give a urine (pee) sample or instead, women can take a swab from the lower vagina (a cotton wool bud is used to wipe the area).

The test will only tell you if you have chlamydia. If you think you have another infection (STI), like gonorrhoea, then you will need different tests. Please ask the nurse or doctor about this.



Where can you get this chlamydia test?

To find your local chlamydia screening services use the map or the postcode search that can be found on the right hand column of the website www.chlamydiaSCREENING.nhs.uk.

Otherwise, there are lots of local places where you can get a test; young peoples' clinics, contraception/family planning clinics, your GP surgery, genitourinary (sexual health) clinics and some pharmacies. Just ask one of the staff if you can have a test.

What if you have chlamydia?

If you have chlamydia – we will give you free antibiotic tablets to treat it. The people you have recently had sex with will also need treatment and/or a test to stop them having problems in the future or passing the infection on. We will help you to contact your partners if you do not want to do so.

Do tell us if you could be pregnant, as you may need to have different antibiotics. Remember: antibiotics can stop the contraceptive pill or patch from working.

It is very rare for the chlamydia test result to be wrong. We'll discuss this with you when you get your results.

If your test shows you do not have chlamydia but you have symptoms, please ring the contact number on this leaflet. It is possible you may have a different infection that needs treatment.

What can you do to stop getting chlamydia?

- Use condoms every time you have sex. This can reduce the risks of getting or passing on chlamydia and other STIs including HIV
- Each time you have a new sexual partner, both of you should get a chlamydia test
- Have a chlamydia test every year while you are under 25
- If you do have chlamydia, take all the tablets you are given
- Do not have any sex (oral, vaginal, anal or use sex toys) with partner(s) until they have been treated too.

For more information on the National Chlamydia Screening Programme visit the website:

www.chlamydiaSCREENING.nhs.uk

or you can call the Sexual Health Help Line:

0800 567 123

Text Phone: 0800 521 361

Or contact your local chlamydia screening office:

