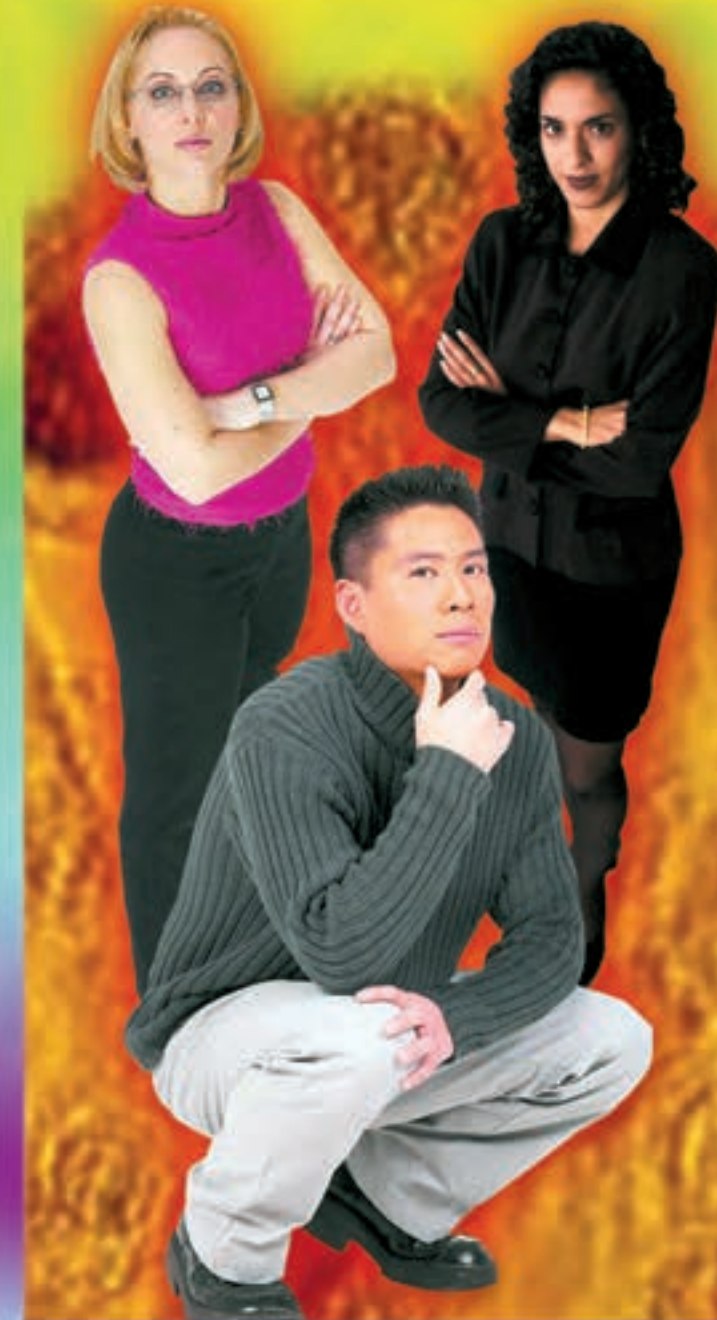


Chlamydia

silent enemy



For More Information

Go to www.intheknowzone.com for an extension of this pamphlet. Increase your knowledge using the information, statistics, images, and links. Test your understanding with a quick quiz.

National STD Hotline:
(800) 227-8922

**Don't stay in
the dark.
Get In the Know!**



A Sneak Attack

Chlamydia (say "kluh-MID-ee-ah") is the most common sexually transmitted disease (STD). About 3 million Americans get chlamydia every year. Up to 4 out of every 10 women with chlamydia get pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can make women infertile, losing the ability to have children. Men with chlamydia can lose the ability to father children.

Less than one-third of the people who get chlamydia get treatment.

Why?

People don't get treatment for chlamydia because most often they don't know they have it.

That's right. Much of the time, this serious, common disease has no symptoms. Only about 1 out of 4 women with chlamydia have ANY signs of the disease. About half of men with the disease have symptoms. Later on, people develop serious problems that cause permanent damage.

The damage doesn't have to happen. Chlamydia is preventable and curable. The key is finding out early that you have it, getting treatment, and preventing future infection.

One of the Crowd

Any woman or man who has unprotected sex is at risk for chlamydia.

Women are more at risk of getting chlamydia because of the way their bodies are designed. Women are also more likely to suffer complications from the disease. Sex partners may pass on the disease without suffering from it themselves.

How People Get Chlamydia

Chlamydia is passed from person to person through sex. You can get it from any kind of sex that involves contact with someone's genitals: vaginal sex, anal sex, or oral sex. Penetration is not necessary to spread the disease.

The disease infects the reproductive systems, rectums, or throats of men and women.

Preventing the Spread

www.intheknowzone.com/chlamydia/prev

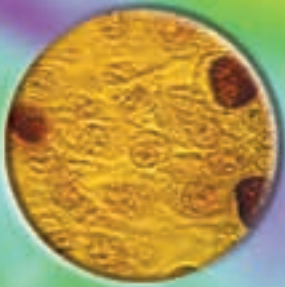
no signs



in the know

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About Chlamydia

Chlamydia spreads through sexual contact. Most of the time women who get it have no symptoms at all. Only about half of men with the disease have symptoms. Even when there are no signs, the disease can cause permanent damage to women's and men's bodies.

Stop the Spread

The most effective way to keep from getting chlamydia or any STD is not to have unprotected sex or only have sex with one *uninfected* partner, like a spouse.

You can reduce the risk of getting chlamydia if you:

- Limit your number of partners.
- Make sober decisions. Alcohol and other drugs make it hard to make good choices.
- Use a condom or other latex barrier every time you have any kind of sex.

Condoms must be used correctly, and they must be used every time. A woman can use a female condom instead of the man wearing a condom.

People need a latex barrier for protection during oral sex, too. That's true whether someone is "giving" or "receiving." A couple can cut a condom in half lengthwise to use as a barrier.

Important: Birth control pills and other contraceptives do not protect you against chlamydia or any other STD.

Possible Signs

Most people don't have any signs that they have chlamydia. When people do have symptoms, this is what they are:

In women:

- Abnormal vaginal discharge
- Burning during urination
- Low back or belly pain
- Painful sex
- Bleeding between periods

In men:

- Discharge from the penis
- Burning during urination
- Burning or itching around penis opening
- Painful or swollen testicles

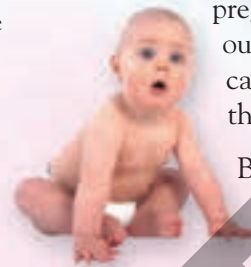


sober decisions

Long-Term Trouble

Even without symptoms, chlamydia can do serious damage to your body.

Many women with untreated chlamydia develop pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can be very painful. It greatly increases a woman's chance of having an *ectopic* pregnancy (where the pregnancy implants outside the womb). These pregnancies can kill women. Women can also lose the ability to have children.



Babies of women with untreated chlamydia can get eye, ear, or lung infections during birth.

Men with chlamydia can suffer *epididymitis*. This is a painful infection in the scrotum (the sac that holds the testicles). It can lead to sterility or disabling arthritis.

Chlamydia's Long-Term Damage

www.intheknowzone.com/chlamydia/damage

Finding It Early

There are two simple tests for chlamydia.

In many areas of the country, a doctor or nurse will test fluid from the cervix or penis. A Pap test or sports physical is not the same as being tested for chlamydia. You have to ask for a chlamydia test.

Sometimes, a urine test is available for chlamydia.

Goodbye, Chlamydia

Chlamydia can be cured with special antibiotics. If caught early, chlamydia can be cured before it does permanent damage to your body.

People diagnosed with chlamydia must inform their sex partners. The partners must be treated quickly so that they do not continue to spread the disease. Some clinics will inform your partner(s) for you without using your name.

Testing and Cure

www.intheknowzone.com/chlamydia/treat



Skip the Suffering

No one needs to suffer pain or injuries from chlamydia. Stop chlamydia and other STDs before they affect you and the ones you care about.

However, if you do get it, chlamydia can be treated easily and completely cured.

There's one reason that chlamydia causes painful infections like PID and epididymitis. There's one reason that people become infertile from these infections. The reason: they don't get tested.

get tested

Action!

If you are sexually active, you are at risk for chlamydia. You could already have it without knowing.

Get tested for chlamydia. Many communities offer free or cheap chlamydia testing. Call your local family planning clinic or health department for testing information.

Chlamydia testing is quick, easy, and **TOTALLY** worth it.

