WHAT IS CHLAMYDIA?
Chlamydia trachomatis is the most common bacterial sexually transmitted infection in our community.

It affects both women and men, including men who have sex with men. In women it causes an infection of the cervix and in men it infects the urethra. Less commonly Chlamydia can infect the anus or can also cause conjunctivitis (inflammation of the eye).

HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?
Chlamydia is most often transmitted by vaginal or anal sex. Condoms prevent its transmission.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?
Most men and women do not have any signs and symptoms. When symptoms are present, the following may be noticed:

Men
• Redness at the opening of the penis
• Stinging or burning when passing urine
• A discharge from the penis (which is often clear in colour)
• If not treated, Chlamydia may occasionally cause pain and swelling in one or both testicles.

Women
• A change in vaginal discharge
• Irregular bleeding (especially after sex)
• Pelvic pain, including pain during sexual intercourse
• Stinging or burning when passing urine

If not treated, Chlamydia can cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) which is infection of the uterus and fallopian tubes. PID may lead to infertility.

HOW DO YOU TEST FOR CHLAMYDIA?
Chlamydia is tested for by taking a swab (a sample of secretions) from the cervix or vagina or by a urine sample. If an anal infection is suspected, a swab is taken from the anus.

HOW IS CHLAMYDIA TREATED?
Very effective treatment is available with antibiotics such as azithromycin or doxycycline.

However, if complications of Chlamydia such as PID or testicular infection are suspected, a longer course of treatment is given.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE THE SYMPTOMS TO GO AWAY AFTER TREATMENT?
The symptoms will usually start to ease over a few days after treatment. If you are still experiencing problems after a week you should see your doctor again.

WHEN IS IT SAFE TO HAVE SEX AGAIN?
You should not have any sexual contact for one week after completion of treatment. (Not even sex with a condom).

You must ensure you do not have sex with any previous or current partners until one week after they are also treated.

If your partner is treated after you, this means no sex until one week after they are treated. Otherwise you could become reinfected, and would need further treatment.

DO I LET MY PARTNERS KNOW?
Yes. We strongly encourage you let all your sexual partners in the last 3 months know that they have been a contact of chlamydia. You should advise all these partners to get tested and treated, (even if you think you know who you got this infection from).

Include partners you’ve had any sexual contact with. This includes vaginal or anal sex, oral sex and any other genital to genital contact, (even if a condom was used).

Chlamydia often has no symptoms, so it’s still important for your partners to be tested and treated even if they show no sign of infection.

This fact sheet is designed to provide you with information on Chlamydia. It is not intended to replace the need for a consultation with your doctor. All clients are strongly advised to check with their doctor about any specific questions or concerns they may have. Every effort has been taken to ensure that the information in this pamphlet is correct at the time of printing.

Last Updated 2015
CHLAMYDIA

Recent studies conducted at Melbourne Sexual Health Centre have shown that you’re much more likely to be reinfected with the same infection if your partners are not notified.

**HOW CAN I LET MY PARTNERS KNOW?**
Most people find this is best done directly, either in person or via phone call or test message. If you don’t feel comfortable contacting partners personally, there are two websites enabling you to send a free and anonymous text message or email:

- Let Them know [www.letthemknow.org.au](http://www.letthemknow.org.au), this website if available for anyone to use.
- Drama Down Under [www.thedramadownunder.info/notify](http://www.thedramadownunder.info/notify), this website is specifically for gay men, or men with male sexual partners, and allows you to contact several people in one go.
- If you live in NSW ring the NSW Sexual Health Infoline on 1800 451 624.
- If you live in Qld visit [Qld Department of Health Sexual Health Website](http://www.qld.gov.au/health/safe-sex/).  

**HOW DO I AVOID RE-INFECTION?**
Your best protection against reinfection is by notifying your partners, ensuring that current partners are treated and consistent condom use with all future partners. We know sometimes that alcohol and other drugs can influence your decisions about sex and condom use. One of our nurses, doctors or counsellors can chat with you about ways to further reduce your risk or refer you to another service for appropriate support. Meeting sexual partners at sex on premises venues and online carries a greater risk of getting an STI. If you do meet partners this way, always practise safe sex.

**TEST OF REINFECTION**
We recommend a repeat test at 3 months after treatment to ensure you have not been reinfected.

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