Patient Guide

Sexually Transmitted Infection Treatment

Chlamydia and Gonorrhea are sexually transmitted infections (STIs) caused by bacteria that you can get from oral, anal, and vaginal sex. There are many signs/symptoms of STIs; however, many people do not have any symptoms. Even people who have no symptoms can still pass STIs to sex partner(s).

What should I do next?

- Get treated.
- Tell your sex partner(s) in the past 60 days or your most recent sex partner if you haven't had a sex partner in the past 60 days. Explain that you have been diagnosed with and treated for an STI called chlamydia and/or gonorrhea and that they may have been exposed.
- Give them the medicine or the prescription for medicine.
- Encourage partner(s) to read the fact sheet information you give to them.
- Encourage your sex partner(s) to visit a health care provider for HIV and STI testing, even if they take the medicine.
- Visit a health care provider in three months for HIV and STI testing.

EPT (Expediated Partner Treatment)

EPT allows health care providers to give medication or a prescription to patients diagnosed with an STI to deliver to their sex partner(s), so they can also be treated without requiring an examination.

My sex partners have no symptoms. Should they still take this medicine?

Yes. People with chlamydia and/or gonorrhea may not experience any symptoms. Taking the medicine for chlamydia will only cure chlamydia. Taking the medicine for gonorrhea will only cure gonorrhea.

What if my sex partner is pregnant or thinks they may be pregnant?

Certain medications are not safe to take during pregnancy. Doxycycline is **NOT** for people who are pregnant, think they may be pregnant, or are nursing. If your sex partner is pregnant or thinks they are pregnant, they should see a health care provider as soon as possible to be tested for HIV and STIs. Pregnant patients and/or partners who receive EPT need a repeat test four weeks after finishing treatment.

What should I do after giving my partners this medicine?

The medicine takes seven days to work. Do not have vaginal, oral, or anal sex for at least seven days after both you and your sex partner(s) have been treated. You can get STIs again if you have sex before the medicine cures you and your partner(s).

What should my sex partners expect when they go to the pharmacy to pick up the medicine?

If you gave your partner(s) a prescription, the pharmacist may ask for some information such as name, address, date of birth, and form of payment (insurance, co-payment, self-pay) when the prescription is dropped off or picked up at the pharmacy.

What if a partner won't take the medicine?

If a sex partner won't take the medicine, they should see a health care provider as soon as possible to be tested for STIs and treated. In the meantime, do not have sex with new or past sex partner(s) until they are treated and the medicine has seven days to work.

What if I can't get the medicine to all my sex partners?

If you are unable to give the medicine to all your partners, return it to the health care provider who gave it to you. Do not share medicine that was intended for you to take yourself. You need to take all your medicine and so do your partners.

How can I protect myself from STIs?

Get tested for other STIs. You should get tested at each body site where you have sex. Certain STIs, such as gonorrhea and chlamydia, can infect the genitals, throat, and rectum. Testing only the genitals may miss an infection you have elsewhere. If you have a history of two or more STIs, you are at increased risk for re-infection and HIV.

Take the medicine that you have been prescribed or given. It is important to follow the instructions that were given to you.

Wait to have sex. After you and your partner(s) each take the medicine, wait at least seven days before you have any sex. This gives the medicine time to work. If you have sex too soon, you or your partner(s) could get the infection again. Talk about the risk and prevention of STIs with new partner(s) BEFORE you have sex.

Use a condom or dental dam every time you have oral, anal, or vaginal sex. When used correctly, condoms and dental dams can greatly reduce the risk of getting STIs. If you are a person living with HIV, or may have been exposed to HIV, you should contact your health care provider for a complete exam, including testing for STIs and HIV.

For more information, please contact your health care provider or Maine CDC's STI Prevention Program at 207.287.3747 or maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/diseases-conditions/sexually-transmitted-diseases

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

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