

Patient Information:

Chlamydia: Questions and Answers

- Signs and Symptoms
- Testing
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What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection that is sexually transmitted. It may infect the male and female genital tracts and also the throat after oral-genital sex.

Why be tested for Chlamydia?

Most men and women don't show signs and symptoms of Chlamydia infections. If not treated early, Chlamydia can cause scarring of the reproductive tracts of both men and women making it difficult or impossible to have children in the future.

Are there ever signs and symptoms?

Yes, both men and women may have burning with urination. Men may have a discharge from the urethra (opening in the penis) and testicular pain. Women may have pelvic pain, bleeding between periods or after sex, and an increase in vaginal discharge.

Is there a Chlamydia test?

Women may visit the Women's Clinic at Schiffert Health Center and request a test or have the test done as part of their annual exam at the Women's Clinic. The test involves using a cotton swab to collect a specimen from a woman's cervix. It is not the same as the pap test.

Men may visit the Medical Clinic at Schiffert Health Center and request a test. The test may be done on the first urine specimen of the day or a swab can be taken from the urethra (opening in the penis).

Test results may take up to a week to return. Results are not given over the phone. Schiffert Health Center requires a second appointment for anyone who tests positive for Chlamydia. You will be called and a follow-up appointment will be scheduled if your test result is positive. You will only be notified if your result is positive.

Is there a charge for testing?

Yes, Schiffert Health Center charges a nominal fee for Chlamydia testing. The charge is billed to Student Accounts as a Medical Clinic charge. The charges may be paid at Schiffert Health Center with cash, check or Hokie Passport.

Can it be treated?

Yes, but all sexual contacts must be treated simultaneously whether they have symptoms or not, to prevent re-infection of partners. Partners should abstain from sexual activity until both people have completed their medication. An antibiotic will be prescribed and should be taken in its entirety, even if symptoms go away before it is finished.

How can Chlamydia be prevented?

Abstaining from sexual contact (vaginal, oral or anal) can prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Limiting the number of partners **reduces the risk** of contracting **any** sexually transmitted disease.

Because Chlamydia is spread through sexual fluids, semen, vaginal and oral secretions, correct and consistent use of latex condoms provides effective protection against Chlamydia. The condom needs to be in place before any genital to genital contact to prevent infection. A condom should be used with every act of sexual intercourse.