

# Facts & DETAILS

## Chlamydia

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### What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by the bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

### How common is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is the most commonly reported STI in the United States with more than 1.5 million cases reported each year.

### How do people become infected?

Chlamydia is spread from person to person during vaginal, anal, or oral sex.

### What are the signs and symptoms of chlamydia?

About 75% of women and 50% of men do not show chlamydia symptoms. Symptoms that could occur include discharge from the penis or vagina, burning or pain when urinating, and having to go to the bathroom more often. Men may experience swollen or tender testicles. Women may bleed between periods or after sex or have lower abdominal pain with fever or nausea.

If left untreated, chlamydia can damage the reproductive organs in both males and females and cause sterility.

### How long can you spread chlamydia?

After exposure, symptoms appear in 1 to 4 weeks. Someone with chlamydia is contagious until the infected person completes a 7 day course of antibiotics or 7 days after taking single-dose antibiotics. Most people do not clear chlamydia without antibiotic treatment.

### Who is at risk for chlamydia?

Anyone who is sexually active can be infected with chlamydia, but sexually active people under age 24 years, men who have sex with men, people with multiple partners, those who have unprotected sex, and women with cervical ectopy (cells from endocervix are present on ectocervix) have a higher risk for infection.

### How is chlamydia treated?

Chlamydia is caused by a bacteria, so it can be treated with antibiotics. Chlamydia can only be diagnosed using a laboratory test. A sample must be swabbed from the site of exposure, such as the throat, cervix, penis, or anus, or by using a urine test. The urine test will only be positive if that was site of exposure.

### How can you prevent chlamydia?

There is no vaccine to prevent chlamydia. Some ways to prevent infection include:

- Use a condom correctly every time you have sex
- Reduce the number of sexual partners
- Notify all partners within the 60 days prior to symptom onset about your chlamydia infection, so they can be tested

Chlamydia testing and treatment can be done at the Sedgwick County Division of Health, 2716 West Central Avenue, Wichita, Kansas.

For More Information:  
Sedgwick County Division of Health  
Epidemiology Program  
1900 E. 9th St.  
Wichita, KS 67214  
(316) 660-7300  
[www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org)



Sedgwick County...  
working for you

Sedgwick County Corporate Communications Office

316-660-9370 525 N. Main Suite 315 Wichita KS 67203 [www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org)