

## Description

Chlamydial infections are caused by the bacteria *Chlamydia trachomatis* and are among the most prevalent sexually transmitted diseases in the United States today. More than half of the infections diagnosed as non-gonococcal urethritis (NGU) or non-specific urethritis (NSU) in men and women are caused by a *Chlamydia* bacteria. Some bladder infections and many cases of pelvic inflammatory disease may also be due to chlamydia.

It is estimated that 75% of infected women and 50% of infected men show NO SYMPTOMS. As a result, they may not seek treatment until serious complications occur. Even without symptoms, transmission can occur. Those individuals without symptoms who are infected may unknowingly transmit the infection to sexual partners. The incidence of chlamydial infections is especially high in the 17 to 30 year old age range, since members of this population are more likely to be sexually active with multiple partners.

*Chlamydia* is a bacteria that invades the lower genital tract. If left untreated, it may move on to the deeper tissues of the reproductive organs where it can cause irreversible damage.

### For more information:

Student Health & Wellness Center.....707-654-1170

Visit Our Website at <http://www.csum.edu/web/campus-life/student-center/student-health-center>

24-hr Nurse Advice Line (Med Call).....800-877-0027

American Social Health Association (ASHA)

National STD Hotline.....800-227-8922

***\*\*Special Thanks to San Diego State University\*\****

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## Chlamydia



*California Maritime Academy*

*A campus of the California State University*



# Chlamydia

## Symptoms

If symptoms occur, they may include:

Women:

- Spotting between periods
- Burning urination
- Abnormal vaginal discharge
- Severe symptoms, including associated with pelvic inflammatory disease (i.e. lower abdominal pain or cramping and fever)

Men:

- Burning urination
- Urethral discharge
- Testicular pain

## Complications

It is important to see a medical provider for even the mildest symptoms. If untreated, Chlamydia has the potential to cause serious complications, particularly for women, including infertility. Infants born to infected mothers can acquire the infection during passage through the birth canal. These babies are at increased risk of eye infections or pneumonia.

## Diagnosis

Diagnosing a Chlamydia infection involves an examination of the genital area by a medical provider. Diagnosis for men includes a urinalysis (testing of urine sample). For women, diagnosis involves a pelvic examination and a swab of the opening of the cervix. A Chlamydia test is usually included in the annual Pap/pelvic exam offered at CMA Student Health Services. Off-campus medical providers may not include this test. Be sure to ask what tests are being performed during an annual pelvic exam.

## Treatment

Oral antibiotic treatment is highly effective in eradicating Chlamydia infections. It is important to take the medication for as long as it is prescribed, even if symptoms have disappeared. Continued infection may occur if treatment is discontinued prematurely. Sexual partner(s) should be treated as well, even if there are no symptoms. A post-treatment examination may be recommended to ensure complete recovery. Refrain from intercourse until all partners have completed the treatment.

## Prevention

Transmission of Chlamydia trachomatis can be eliminated by abstaining from sexual activity. For those individuals who choose to be sexually active, using condoms during every sexual encounter will decrease risk of infection. Spermicides may also provide some protection against this infection. Taking precautions cannot eliminate risks, but can certainly decrease them.

## Contraception

When given a prescription for antibiotics and you are taking oral contraceptives, additional contraception methods should be exercised (i.e. female/male condoms). Studies have shown that antibiotics disrupt the absorption process and may decrease the effectiveness of an oral contraceptive. Special attention should be given when taking an antibiotic in the Penicillin family.

