



## **GONORRHEA**

### **What is gonorrhea?**

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a bacteria called *Neisseria gonorrhoea*. It is the second most common bacterial STI.

### **How is it transmitted?**

Gonorrhea is transmitted through unprotected vaginal, anal and/or oral sex with an infected partner. You can pass it on without even knowing that you are infected.

### **What are the symptoms?**

Many people do not experience symptoms of gonorrhea. If symptoms do occur, they usually appear two to seven days after exposure.

- Thick yellowish vaginal, penile and/or rectal discharge
- Burning with urination
- Lower abdominal pain
- Vaginal pain and/or bleeding during intercourse
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding
- Rectal pain and/or discharge
- Sore throat
- Burning and/or itching around tip or inside of the penis or around the anus
- Pain and/or swelling in the testes

### **How do I get tested?**

A swab may be taken from the cervix, urethra, throat and/or rectum. A urine test may also be done. Testing is the only way you will know if you have gonorrhea.

### **How is it treated?**

Gonorrhea can be easily treated and cured with antibiotics. In some parts of Canada and the rest of the world, gonorrhea may be resistant to some antibiotics. Please let your health care provider know if you and/or your partner(s) have been travelling. Do not have sexual contact during treatment and for seven days after treatment. Make sure that your partner(s) are treated before resuming any sexual activity. You can be re-infected after treatment.

### **Possible complications:**

- Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), which is an infection in the fallopian tubes, uterus and ovaries
- Infertility (inability to get pregnant)

- Ectopic pregnancy (tubal pregnancy)
- Babies born who are infected with gonorrhea could have severe eye infections or infant pneumonia
- Infection of the testes
- Rarely causes infertility

### **Remember:**

Any infection in the genital area may increase the risk of becoming infected with HIV. Practicing safer sex, by using latex or polyurethane condoms and/or oral dams for oral, anal or vaginal sex can reduce the risk of Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections (STBBIs).

Call the **Aids and Sexual Health Infoline** at 1-800-668-2437 if you have questions or need help.

### **For more information:**

[www.sexandu.ca](http://www.sexandu.ca)

### **Sexual Health Centre**

179 Clarence St,  
Ottawa. ON K1N5P7  
613-234-4641 | TTY: 613-580-9656  
[Ottawapublichealth.ca](http://Ottawapublichealth.ca)