

Gonorrhoea

Gonorrhoea is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the bacterium *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. It is treatable with antibiotics. However, if left untreated, it can cause serious complications. Gonorrhoea affects both men and women. It causes an infection of genitals, rectum and throat. There is a disproportionately high incidence of gonorrhoea among men who have sex with men.

How does the gonorrhoea spread?

The infection is transmitted through unprotected vaginal, oral and anal sexual intercourse with an infected sexual partner. In pregnant women, gonorrhoea can be transmitted to the new-born during childbirth.

How can I prevent gonorrhoea infection?

You can prevent infection by practising safe sex, i.e., having sex with only one faithful partner who is not infected. Otherwise, you can greatly reduce the risk by using condoms correctly during every sexual intercourse.

Am I at risk of becoming infected with gonorrhoea?

Everybody who has unprotected sexual intercourse with an infected person is at risk of becoming infected with gonorrhoea.

I am pregnant. How can gonorrhoea infection affect my unborn child?

If you are pregnant and have gonorrhoea, the infection can be transmitted to the new-born during childbirth. Timely treatment can reduce the possibility of problems in your child.

How can I know if I am infected with gonorrhoea?

In 10% of men, gonorrhoea does not cause any symptoms or signs of illness. In others, after an incubation period of 3–7 days, there is a burning sensation when urinating and a white, yellow or green discharge from the urethra. Half of women with gonorrhoea do not have any symptoms or signs of illness. However, if symptoms are present, they are often mild and can be mistaken for a urinary tract or vaginal infection. Even if women do not experience any problems with gonorrhoea, they can still develop serious complications. Infected women can experience pain or burning sensation when urinating, purulent vaginal discharge, and irregular vaginal bleeding. Rectal infection may be asymptomatic, or it may cause discharge, itching around the anus, pain, and bleeding in both men and women. Infection in the oral cavity usually does not cause problems.

How does a doctor determine gonorrhoea?

The doctor takes a swab from the urethra, cervix, throat, or rectum, or a urine sample for microbiological testing to detect the presence of bacteria.

Can gonorrhoea be cured?

Gonorrhoea can be cured with the appropriate antibiotic. Antibiotics in the form of pills are no longer suitable due to the emergence of resistant strains. Treatment with a combination of antibiotics administered intramuscularly and antibiotics in the form of pills is required. This treatment also cures chlamydia infection, which is often associated with gonorrhoea.

I was treated for gonorrhoea. When can I have sexual intercourse again?

To prevent reinfection with gonorrhoea or spreading the infection to your partner, you must wait seven days after completing treatment before having sexual intercourse. Even if you have been treated for gonorrhoea in the past, you can become infected again if you have sexual intercourse with an infected person.

What happens if I don't get treatment?

Untreated gonorrhoea can cause serious and long-lasting health problems in men and women. In women untreated gonorrhoea can cause long-term inflammation in the abdominal cavity, which can lead to ectopic pregnancy (the embryo implants outside the uterus, in the abdominal cavity) due to the formation of scar tissue. It can also cause infertility or long-term pain in the abdomen and/or pelvis. In men, gonorrhoea can cause inflammation of the prostate, epididymis and testicles. It rarely causes male infertility. Untreated gonorrhoea can spread to the bloodstream and joints. This complication can be life-threatening. Untreated gonorrhoea infection can increase the risk of infection or transmission of HIV.

How common is gonorrhoea?

The data and information about gonorrhoea in Slovenia are available here: [Spolno prenesene okužbe v Sloveniji | Nijz](#)

The data about gonorrhoea in Europe is gathered and forwarded by the ECDC ([European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#)).