

# GONORRHEA FACT SHEET

**Reviewed By Medical Director:** Aditya Chandraesekhar, MD, MPH, FACP | **Updated On:** 02/14/2023

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## What is Gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that can cause infection in the genitals, rectum, and/or throat. It is very common, especially amongst people between the ages of 15–24 years old.

## How does it spread?

You can get gonorrhea by having vaginal, anal, or oral sex with someone who has gonorrhea. A pregnant person with gonorrhea can give the infection to their baby during childbirth.

## Signs and Symptoms

Gonorrhea is one of the STD/STIs that can often show no symptoms – even so, it can cause serious and long term effects without present symptoms.

- Present symptoms can include:
  - Vaginal bleeding between menstruation cycles;
  - Increased vaginal discharge; and
  - Painful/burning sensation when peeing;
  - White, yellow, or green discharge from the penis; and
  - Swollen or painful testicles (less common)
  - Painful bowel movements;
  - Anal itching;
  - Discharge;
  - Soreness; and
  - Bleeding

## Test Options

Often, testing will be conducted via a urine sample – if you have also had oral and/or anal sex, your health practitioner might also utilize swabs to collect a sample from your throat and/or rectum. Certain cases might warrant a swab collected from the urethra in the penis or the cervix.

## Treatment Options

The right treatment can cure gonorrhea – it is important to complete the treatment plan your health practitioner provides entirely i.e. do not share your medication or take only a portion of the medication provided. Medication will stop the infection, however, it will not undo any permanent damage caused by the disease.

Return to your healthcare provider if you find that your symptoms are not resolving for more than a few days after starting treatment – as drug resistant strains of gonorrhea increase, it has become harder to treat some gonorrhea strains.