WHAT IS CHLAMYDIA?

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted disease (STD), especially in women ages 15–25. The good news is that chlamydia can be treated and cured with antibiotics. But if left untreated, it can leave women unable to have children later in life. That's why you need to talk to a health care provider about testing for chlamydia.

HOW COMMON IS CHLAMYDIA?

An estimated three million Americans are infected with chlamydia each year. It is most common in young women ages 15–24, whose cervixes (openings to the womb) are not fully matured and may be more susceptible to infection. Like many STDs, chlamydia often shows no symptoms, so many who are infected do not know it. The only way to know for sure is to **GYT – Get Yourself Tested.**

HOW DOES SOMEONE GET CHLAMYDIA?

Chlamydia is spread through unprotected sex with someone who is infected. Someone can have chlamydia for a long time without showing any symptoms. That's why it is often passed between partners who are not aware they have it.

You can get chlamydia from a one-time partner or from a long-term partner – even if you've only had one lifetime partner or are in a monogamous relationship. Your partner may have gotten it from an earlier relationship without knowing it.

DID YOU KNOW?

When you get a pelvic exam or Pap test, you are not automatically tested for chlamydia or any other STD. You need to ask if you want to be tested.

WOULDN'T I KNOW IF I OR MY PARTNER HAD CHLAMYDIA?

Most women who have chlamydia **don't know it**. That's because in most cases there are not any obvious symptoms. In cases where there are symptoms, you might notice:

- Abnormal discharge from the vagina
- Burning when you urinate
- Pain or discomfort during sex
- Pain in the lower belly or back, sometimes with a fever
- Bleeding after sex or between periods
- Pain, bleeding, or discharge from your rectum if you have had anal sex

WHY SHOULD I GET TESTED FOR CHLAMYDIA?

The only sure way to know if you have chlamydia is to **GYT - Get Yourself Tested**. You can't assume that you are being tested, you have to ask to be tested for chlamydia. To find a testing center near you, visit **FindSTDtest.org.** Worried about cost? There are clinics that offer low cost or free testing.

WHAT'S INVOLVED IN GETTING TESTED FOR CHLAMYDIA?

You can be tested with:

- A urine sample
- A sample (swab) from your cervix or vagina. A health professional can take this sample for you; it can be done during your routine pelvic exam or Pap test. Or, in some parts of the U.S., self-tests are available so you can do this yourself (see **Iwantthekit.org**).

WHAT IF I TEST POSITIVE FOR CHLAMYDIA? WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The good news is that chlamydia can be treated and cured with antibiotics. But if left untreated, it can leave women unable to have children later in life. That's why you need to ask your doctor for a chlamydia test every year – to find and treat it before it leads to serious health problems.

Some things to keep in mind if you are diagnosed with chlamydia:

- If you test positive for chlamydia, your partner(s) should be tested and treated, too.
- Don't stop taking the antibiotics until the entire prescription is finished, or you will not be cured.
- Don't share your antibiotics with others.
- You should get tested again about three months after you finish your treatment (or as soon after that as possible) to be sure you have not gotten chlamydia again. If you had symptoms that didn't go away after treatment, it's important to go back to the doctor to get re-evaluated.

IF I HAVE CHLAMYDIA WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR MY PARTNER?

If you have chlamydia, your partner may have chlamydia too, so they should also get tested and treated if necessary. If your partner has chlamydia and doesn't get treated, you will likely get re-infected again if you're still having sex. If you and your partner are infected, avoid having sex until you've both finished your treatment and no longer have any symptoms – so you don't re-infect each other. For tips on talking with your partner about chlamydia and other sexually transmitted diseases, visit GYTNOW.org

CAN I GET CHLAMYDIA AGAIN AFTER I'VE BEEN TREATED?

Yes, you can get chlamydia again if exposed to someone who has it, even if you've been treated and cured in the past.

TO FIND A TESTING CENTER NEAR YOU

GO TO **FindSTDtest.org**

CDC.GOV/GYT

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T GET TREATED?

Even if you don't show any symptoms, chlamydia can stay in your body if it is not treated. It can sometimes spread into your reproductive organs and cause serious and painful infections, like pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), an infection of the uterus (womb), fallopian tubes (which carry eggs from the ovaries to the uterus), and other reproductive organs. PID can cause painful symptoms like lower belly pain. If untreated, it can lead to infertility.

Infections caused by untreated chlamydia can damage your reproductive organs, leading to problems such as:

- Chronic (or lasting) pain in your pelvic area
- Infertility (an inability to get pregnant)
- Ectopic pregnancy – this is an abnormal pregnancy, when the fertilized egg grows outside the womb (uterus). This can be life threatening.

If you are pregnant and do not treat chlamydia, you could pass the infection to your baby when giving birth. Untreated, chlamydia can cause serious health problems for babies, including eye infections and pneumonia. Once diagnosed, chlamydia can be readily treated and cured with antibiotics.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I BE TESTED?

If you are 25 or younger and having sex, you should be tested for chlamydia at least once a year – even if you don't have symptoms. No matter how old you are, you should also get tested for chlamydia if you are having sex with more than one partner, having sex with a new partner, having sex with someone who might have chlamydia, or are pregnant.

HOW CAN I REDUCE MY RISK OF GETTING CHLAMYDIA?

If you have sex, you can reduce your risk of getting chlamydia and other STDs by using condoms each and every time you have sex, from start to finish.

You can also reduce your risk of getting or passing on chlamydia and other STDs by getting tested with your partner, and getting treated as necessary.

Talk with your partner about condoms and getting tested before you start to have sex. It is a lot easier than discovering you have an STD after you have sex.

CHLAMYDIA AND GUYS

Chlamydia doesn't just affect women.

Symptoms: Just like women, most men with chlamydia have no symptoms. Men who do have symptoms, may experience discharge from the penis, burning during urination, or burning and itching around the opening of the penis.

Testing: Done either by giving a urine sample or having a health professional swab the penis.

Possible health effects: May include pain and swelling of the testicles.

Responding to the fact that young people account for half of the 20 million new sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) occurring in the U.S. each year – and most don't know they are infected – the GYT campaign is a youthful, empowering social movement to reduce the spread of STDs among young people through prevention; information; open communication with partners; health care providers, and parents; and testing and treatment as needed.

GYT encourages testing for STDs, including HIV, and empowers young people to have an open dialogue about STDs.

GYT was launched in April 2009 as an ongoing promotion under It's Your (Sex) Life, a longstanding public information partnership of MTV and the Kaiser Family Foundation. Supporting partners of GYT include: American College Health Association (ACHA), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Kaiser Family Foundation, MTV, National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSD), and Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

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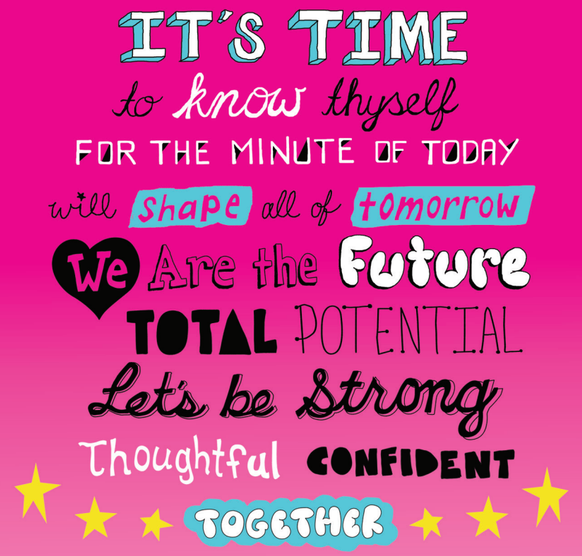

GET YOURSELF TESTED FOR CHLAMYDIA TODAY

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