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Health

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The facts about

GONORRHOEA.

**Sex without a
condom increases
your likelihood of
getting an STI.**

WHAT IS IT?

Gonorrhoea is a bacterial infection that can be spread during anal, vaginal/frontal or oral sex or when using sex toys. Some studies indicate that it can be spread orally when deep kissing if one of the people involved has oral gonorrhoea. It can also be passed on during birth to a new-born. If left untreated, gonorrhoea can cause infertility and other serious complications.

'SUPER GONORRHOEA'

Recently a strain of gonorrhoea that is resistant to some of the antibiotics used to treat the infection has been on the rise in England so it's important that people get tested and treated quickly if you believe you have picked up an infection.

This will help to stop the spread of this antibiotic-resistant strain.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Many people, especially women and those with a vagina/front hole, may not experience any symptoms at all. If symptoms are present, they can include the following.

In the penis:

- a yellowish, white or green discharge
- a burning feeling, especially when urinating
- swelling of the foreskin.

It may also cause pain or tenderness in the testicles, although this is rare.

In the vagina/
front hole:

- an unusual discharge, which may be thin and watery, green or yellow
- a burning feeling when urinating
- heavier bleeding than usual and bleeding between periods.

It may also cause lower abdominal pain or tenderness.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

Using an external or internal condom cuts the risk, but doesn't eliminate it entirely. Using water or silicon based lube with condoms also helps avoid any small tears in the skin which increases the chances of infection.

A free vaccine for gonorrhoea, '4CMenB', is being made available in England for gay and bisexual men who have recently had multiple partners or an STI. Other people from communities which carry the highest burden of gonorrhoea cases should also be offered the vaccine, including trans and non-binary people, and people from the Black Caribbean community.

Most people are symptom free if their throat is infected, and in the rectum there are often no symptoms but there might be discomfort and discharge. Gonorrhoea can transfer from the vagina/front hole to the rectum without anal sex being involved.

WHERE CAN I GET TESTED?

You can get tested for gonorrhoea at a sexual health clinic, by ordering a test online that you can do at home, or at a pharmacy if the service is available in your area.

HOW IS IT TREATED?

Gonorrhoea is treated with antibiotics - don't have sex until 7 days after the treatment has finished or you could pass on the infection.

Your clinic will ask you to repeat the test 2 weeks later to check the treatment has worked and cured the infection.

They should also talk with you about your recent sexual partners so they can offer them a test for gonorrhoea and treat them if needed.