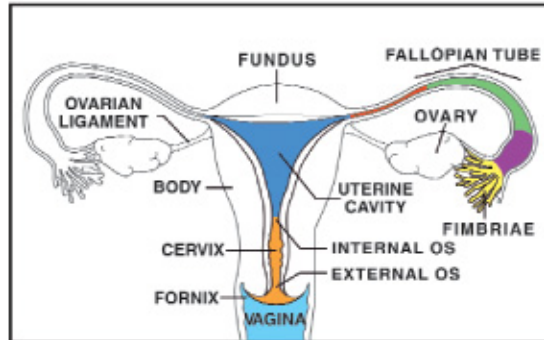


Gonorrhea

Your Diagnosis

Gonorrhea

Your recent laboratory test has revealed that you tested positive for a sexually transmitted disease called gonorrhea. Gonorrhea is



caused by a bacterium called *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. It is the second most common sexually transmitted bacterial infection in the United States. Gonorrhea can infect the genital track, mouth and rectum. Gonorrhea infection may be the result of

engaging in unsafe sex, having sex with multiple sexual partners, having sex with someone who has multiple partners, or having a history of sexually transmitted infections. Gonorrhea can be easily treated with antibiotics; but if left untreated, serious complications may arise.

Gonorrhea Background Information

Almost one million people are infected with gonorrhea each year. Around 75% of all cases are found in young people ages 15-29. Teenage girls between the ages of 15 and 19, have the highest rates of infection.

Gonorrhea is a serious health threat for women and when left untreated can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can cause serious damage to a woman's reproductive organs and can lead to infertility, chronic pelvic pain and an increased risk of ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy that occurs outside the uterus). If you are a pregnant woman and are infected with gonorrhea, you are at greater risk of delivering your child prematurely. You may also pass the infection on to your child at birth, and your child could encounter health complications.

Although gonorrhea is the second most common sexually transmitted bacterial infection in the United States, many people do not know they have it because of a lack of noticeable symptoms. Approximately 50% of infected men and women do not know they have gonorrhea. People who do not have symptoms may pass the infection to their sex partners without knowing. Gonorrhea is also known as clap, drip or GC.

Symptoms

If symptoms occur in infected women, they may take the form of:

- An abnormal vaginal discharge
- Pain during urination
- An urge to urinate more than usual
- Pain during sexual intercourse
- Abdominal pain
- Spotting between periods
- Nausea and fever

If symptoms occur in infected men, they may take the form of:

- Discharge from the penis
- Pain during urination
- Swollen or tender testicles

Follow-up Options for Gonorrhea

Gonorrhea is easy to treat and can be cured quickly. Your doctor will prescribe antibiotics to kill the bacteria. It is important to remember to take all of the prescribed medicine; even if the symptoms disappear, the infection may remain in your system. It is also important that you and your partner be treated at the same time and that you both avoid sexual contact during treatment, to prevent reinfection.

To minimize your risk for gonorrhea infection, you should:

- Use condoms or diaphragms during sexual intercourse
- Remain in a monogamous relationship
- Limit your number of sexual partners
- Include gonorrhea screening as part of your annual examination or when you have your first prenatal visit

Important Questions to Ask Your Doctor

- What do my results mean?
- For my condition, what follow-up options do I have?
- What do you suggest and why?
- How can I prevent this from happening again?
- When do you recommend a repeat gonorrhea test?

Sources for Additional Information

- Associated Pathology Medical Group: www.apmglab.com or 800-848-2764
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov
- WebMD: www.webmd.com
- National Institutes of Health: www.nih.gov



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