

You just found out that you may have been exposed to gonorrhea, a sexually transmitted disease (STD)...

Now what?

Here's what you can do to take care of your health.

Please read this carefully.

- You are getting medicines or prescriptions for medicines that cure: gonorrhea.
- Your sex partner was treated for gonorrhea. One of you might have caught this from the other; sometimes it is difficult to tell who had it first.

The good news is that gonorrhea is easy to treat.

Keep reading carefully to find out how you can take the medicines to take care of your health.

What are the symptoms of gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that you can get from having sex with a person who already has it. You can get gonorrhea from having any kind of sex: oral, vaginal or anal.

Many people with gonorrhea feel fine and do not have any symptoms. Other people may have symptoms including.

| Men may have: | Women may have: |
|--|--|
| No symptoms at all. | No symptoms at all |
| Discharge (drip) from your penis. | Change in your usual vaginal discharge. |
| Pain and swelling in your testicles (balls). | Pain during sex. |
| Pain or discomfort when urinating (peeing). | Bleeding or spotting between periods or after sex. |
| | Pain in lower belly or pelvis. |
| | Pain when urinating (peeing). |



What should I do?

It is very important that you get treated right away, even if you do not have symptoms. If you do not take medicine to treat gonorrhea, you might get sick. If you are a woman, you might not be able to get pregnant in the future.

The best way to take care of this disease is to see your own doctor or health care provider right away. Be sure to tell your doctor or health care provider that your sex partner was treated for gonorrhea.

What if I don't have a health care provider or have insurance?

If you do not have a health care provider, or if you do not have insurance, you might be able to receive free care for STDs at your county health department. Your partner's health care provider might have written the name and phone number of the county health department clinic at the bottom of this information. If not, you can find the number for your county health department in the telephone book.

If you can't get to a health care provider in the next several days, then you should take two antibiotic medicines to cure gonorrhea. Your partner might have given you the actual medicines or a prescription that you can take to a pharmacy. See below for instructions on how to take them.

What medicines should I take?

You are being given 2 different kinds of medicine:

1. Take cefixime (also called "Suprax") to cure gonorrhea. Sometimes, if cefixime isn't available, you might receive cefpodoxime (also called "Vantin") to cure gonorrhea.
2. Take azithromycin (also called "Zithromax") to cure gonorrhea.

Azithromycin and cefixime (cefpodoxime if you happen to get that instead) are very safe medicines. Before you take the medicines, please read all of these directions.

DO NOT TAKE THIS MEDICINE IF:

- You are female and have lower belly pain, pain during sex, vomiting or fever.
- You are male and have pain or swelling in the testicles (balls) or fever.
- You have one or more painful, swollen joints.
- You have ever had a bad reaction, rash, breathing problems or allergic reaction after taking any kind of antibiotic.
- You have a serious long-term illness, like kidney, heart, or liver disease, or HIV infection.
- You are currently taking another prescription medicine.

If you have ANY of these conditions, or if you are not sure, then DO NOT take the medicine. DO talk to your health care provider as soon as possible.

Other important information

If you performed oral sex on someone who was infected with gonorrhea, the medicine might not work as well. Go ahead and take the cefixime (or cefpodoxime) and azithromycin, but you should try to see a health care provider to determine whether additional medicine is needed. Be sure to tell the health care provider that you had oral sex with someone who was treated for gonorrhea.

If you are pregnant, take the medicine, but get a full check-up afterwards.

HOW to take CEFIXIME and AZITHROMYCIN

Usually, cefixime (or cefpodoxime) and azithromycin come in pills, but sometimes they come as a liquid or as a powder to be mixed with water.

No matter whether the medicines come in pills, liquid, or powder, follow the instructions on the label carefully. If you need help taking the medicines, contact the pharmacy or clinic where the medicines were given to you or your partner.

Most people will get 5 pills: 4 azithromycin and 1 cefixime. If this is what you have, you should take all 5 pills at the same time, with water. You need to take all 5 of the pills to cure the infections

- Each azithromycin pill contains 250 mg of the medicine (4 pills = 1000 mg total).
- Each cefixime pill contains 400 mg of the medicine (1 pill = 400 mg).

Do NOT take antacids (such as Tums, Rolaids, or Maalox) for one hour before or 2 hours after taking the azithromycin pills.

Do NOT share or give this medicine to anyone else!

Side effects

Some people get a mild upset stomach, diarrhea, or vaginal yeast infection after taking these medicines. These usually are mild and don't last long; if they become more severe, then contact your health care provider to get treatment. Some people vomit up the medicines shortly after taking them. If you vomit up the medicine after you take it, contact your health care provider to get more, or different, medicine.

IF YOU HAVE SIGNS OF AN ALLERGIC REACTION, such as trouble breathing, dizziness, throat tightness, swelling of lips or tongue, or hives (very itchy skin bumps or welts), call 911 or go to the Emergency Room immediately!

NEXT STEPS (After you take the medicines)

DO NOT HAVE SEX FOR THE NEXT 7 DAYS. It takes 7 days for the medicine to cure gonorrhea. During that time, you could still pass these infections on to a sex partner. Condoms may help prevent spread, but the safest way to make sure you don't pass the infection on to anyone is to not have sex for 7 days.

If you have other sex partners, tell them you are getting treated for gonorrhea, so they can get tested and treated if necessary. Contact your county health department to talk to someone who can help you choose the best way to tell your partners, or the county health department can contact your partners for you. The county health department will **NEVER** give your name or identifying information to a contact. The county health department will help the person get tested and treated and will answer any questions they have about their own health.

Even after you take the medicine, it is very important for you to see a health care provider as soon as you can to get tested for other STDs. People can have more than one STD at a time. Azithromycin and cefixime will not cure other infections. Having STDs can increase your risk of getting HIV, so make sure to also get an HIV test.

People who get infected with gonorrhea once are very likely to get infected again. It is a good idea to get tested for gonorrhea, chlamydia and other STDs 3 months from now to be sure you did not get another infection.

If you have any questions about gonorrhea, cefixime or azithromycin, please call:



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