



# South Central Public Health District

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Twin Falls 737-5900 \* Burley 678-8221 \* Gooding 934-4477 \* Bellevue 788-4335 \* Jerome 324-8838 \* Rupert 436-7185

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## CHLAMYDIA

### What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is caused by a bacteria, a germ that you can get by having sexual activity with someone else who has this germ. It can be found in the vagina, rectum, penis, and throat. If left untreated, it can cause serious and possibly permanent damage to the male and female sex organs, making it difficult or impossible to have children. Chlamydia can be passed to the baby during birth.

### What are the signs of Chlamydia?

It is important to know that men and women may not show signs of Chlamydia, especially women. If there are signs, women will find that they have an unusual discharge from their vagina or burning when urinating. Women can also have lower abdominal pain (pain where you have cramps during your period), bleeding between periods, or a low-grade fever. Men may get a discharge from their penis and/or burning when urinating, along with burning and itching around the opening of the penis. Swelling of the testicles and low-grade fever can also occur.

### What do I do if I think I have Chlamydia?

Go immediately to a South Central Public Health District office or health care provider. You will get an exam and a lab test will be done. If they think you have Chlamydia, you will be given a prescription for medicine, an antibiotic. It is important to follow the instructions for taking the medicine carefully. Take medicine until it is all gone, even if the signs go away, and do not share your medicine with anyone. **It is important to tell the health care provider if you are, or think you are, pregnant. It will make a difference in the medicine you will get. Some medicines can hurt the unborn baby.**

### Is Chlamydia serious?

Yes, women can get a painful infection called Pelvic Inflammatory Disease or PID, which in turn can cause permanent damage to the sex organs. This can make it hard to get pregnant or cause a pregnancy that occurs in the fallopian tubes instead of the uterus (womb). A tubal pregnancy can cause death for a pregnant woman. In men, Chlamydia can cause a painful infection in the testicles with swelling and fever, and may make it hard or impossible to have children.

### What about my sex partners?

Since most people do not have early signs, it is important when you find out that you have Chlamydia that you tell your partner(s). Your sex partner(s) should have an exam, be tested, and take medicine at the same time to be sure that it is cleared up. Don't have sex until the health care provider says it is okay. Anyone else you have had sex with in the past few months should also be told, tested, and get treatment. South Central Public Health District will help you contact your partner(s).

### How can I reduce the risk of getting Chlamydia?

- Have sex with only one person who is not infected and who only has sex with you.
- Use latex condoms correctly every time you have any sexual contact.
- Decide not to have sex - it is the only 100% sure way of avoiding Chlamydia and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- When you use drugs and alcohol, it's hard to make good decisions about your sexual activity...be safe.
- Remember: Anyone who is sexually active can get a sexually transmitted disease - including HIV.

### Where can I get more information about Chlamydia?

Call your local personal health care provider or district health office. For referrals and additional information, contact the National STD Hotline at (800) 227-8922 or for local Idaho referrals and information, the Idaho CareLine at (800) 926-2588.