



Cervicitis

What is cervicitis?

Cervicitis is an inflammation in the cervix or the opening of the womb. Cervicitis is common and affects many women at some point during their adult lives.

Cervicitis can be caused by germs transmitted through sex like gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes, or sometimes other organisms that are not routinely tested for.

Having unprotected sex or not using a condom with someone who has a sexually transmitted infection, such as chlamydia or gonorrhea, can cause cervicitis.

To find out if you have cervicitis, you must be examined by a doctor or nurse and have lab tests done.

What are the symptoms?

You may have cervicitis and not have any symptoms. You may notice an increase in the fluid from the vagina, a burning feeling while urinating, the need to urinate more often, bleeding or blood spotting from the vagina, or pain during sexual activity.

What are the complications?

If cervicitis is not treated, it can spread and damage organs in the body, especially the reproductive organs. A woman may have difficulty getting pregnant if the cervicitis goes untreated.

Pregnant women may pass the infection to their baby's eyes during childbirth. Some types of infection can cause blindness if the baby is not treated.

What is the treatment?

The treatment for cervicitis is antibiotic pills. Any sexual partner(s) of the person diagnosed with cervicitis must be treated, regardless of their test results.

Do not have sex until you and your sexual partner(s) have finished all the medication. Take all of the medication exactly as instructed.

Should I be tested for other sexually transmitted infections?

If you have different sexual partners, or if your partner has different partners, you should also be tested for other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis and HIV virus linked to AIDS. The more sexual partners you have, the higher your risk of getting a STI. You should also consider getting vaccinations to prevent hepatitis B infection.

Birth control pills

Birth control pills may not work very well when you are taking some antibiotics. Keep taking your birth control pills while taking any medication. Use also a second form of birth control, such as a condom, until your next period after completing the antibiotics.

Ways to reduce your risk of getting a sexually transmitted infection

- The more partners you have, the more likely you are to be exposed to a sexually transmitted infection.
- To help protect yourself and your partner(s) from a sexually transmitted infection (STI), use a condom during any vaginal, oral, or anal sex.
- Latex and polyurethane male and female condoms help prevent the spread of many sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
- A new condom must be used each time you have sex.
- If a condom breaks, a pregnancy or sexually transmitted infection may occur. If a condom breaks during sex and you are concerned, talk to your health care provider.
- Use only water-based lubricants with male latex condoms. Oil-based lubricants, such as petroleum jelly, lotion or baby oil, can weaken and destroy latex.
- Store latex condoms at room temperature (not too hot and not too cold) and check the expiry date on the condom package.
- Spermicides containing nonoxynol-9 (N-9) may increase the risk of infection/transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, and it is not recommended to prevent HIV or these infections.

For more information, see HealthLink BC File [#08o Condoms Help Prevent Sexually Transmitted Infections \(STIs\)](#).



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