

HIV & Gonorrhoea

Easy to catch – not always obvious



Gonorrhoea, 'gono' or 'the clap' is a sexually transmitted infection that can affect anyone who is sexually active.

The Facts

- A sexually transmitted infection (STI) also known as 'gono' or 'the clap'.
- There are types of gonorrhoea emerging that are antibiotic-resistant (untreatable).
- You can get gonorrhoea in your penis/cock or vagina (genitals), urethra or piss hole, arse (rectum), throat or eyes.
- It's passed on by oral sex or fucking, or genital, arse or hole play (rimming, dipping, rubbing, fingering, and fisting).
- It can be passed on by touching an infected penis or vagina and then touching your own genitals or eyes.
- It can be passed on during mutual masturbation (wanking) or sharing toys.
- You can catch gonorrhoea again even after you've been treated.

Gonorrhoea symptoms

- Symptoms show up between two and ten days from the time of catching the infection.
- It's common to have no symptoms, especially if the infection is in your rectum or arse, vagina or throat.
- Symptoms can include a yellow discharge from the cock or vagina, pain or burning when peeing or taking a piss, pain and bleeding in the arse and vagina during sex, itchiness or pain during bowel movements (shitting).

Anyone who is sexually active needs to have a regular STI test every three months.



Gonorrhoea effects

- Gono can also cause arthritis (inflammation and pain in the joints) and keratoconjunctivitis (an inflammation or redness of the eye).
- If left untreated in men, it can cause epididymitis (painful swelling and infection of the balls or nuts) and for women, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and infertility for both men and women.

HIV and gonorrhoea

- If you have HIV, gono does not affect your viral load if you take your antiretroviral treatments as prescribed.
- If you have gono, it can be easier to catch HIV if your HIV+ partner is not on HIV treatment.
- If you have gono and HIV and are not on HIV treatment, it can be easier to pass on HIV if your partner is not on any HIV prevention treatment (i.e. PrEP).
- Gono can increase your risk for contracting hepatitis C (HCV) and hepatitis B (HBV) if you're not vaccinated.

Test for gonorrhoea

- Anyone who is sexually active should have an STI test every three months.
- Ask your GP or HIV doctor for an STI test, including HIV, when you have your regular blood tests done.
- Gonorrhoea is detected by a urine test as well as swabs collected from the rectum, vagina and throat by a nurse, doctor or yourself.
- Try not to urinate at least one hour before your appointment and urine test.
- It's recommended that you also have an rectum (arse) swab even if you have not had anal sex.

- Testing is free for anyone at any Sexual Health Clinic and you don't have to use your real name. This includes people from overseas who don't have a Medicare Card.

Treat gonorrhoea

- The earlier gono is detected and treated, the better.
- It's usually treated with a combination of antibiotics.
- Take all your antibiotics as prescribed until there are none left.
- After treatment, sexual contact with another person should be avoided for at least one week to ensure the infection has cleared.
- If your symptoms (pain or discharge) continue, go back to your doctor or clinic.

Prevent gonorrhoea

- Use a condom to cover the infected area, if you're having any kind of genital sex. This can reduce the risk of passing gono on or getting it.
- Condoms may not always cover the infected area so it's still possible to pass on.
- Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) does not protect against gono or other STIs.
- Keep toys clean and change the condoms covering them between holes.
- If you are diagnosed with gono or another STI, let your fuck buddies and partners know they will need to get tested.
- If you aren't comfortable telling your fuck buddies or partners yourself, talk to your doctor, nurse or call Positive Life to get some support to let them know.

For more information phone 02 9206 2177 or 1800 245 677 (freecall) or visit www.positivelife.org.au

Updated September 2020

The voice of all people living with HIV

Positive Life NSW