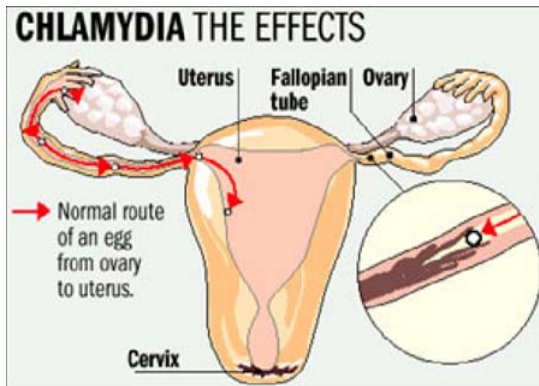

How Can Chlamydia Be Prevented?

Safer sexual behavior can help keep people from becoming infected or re-infected with chlamydia.

- Use condoms correctly every time you have sex. Condoms protect you from STI's including chlamydia.
- Limit the number of sexual partners. Ask your sexual partner if they have other sexual partners.
- Get a screening test for chlamydia.
- If you think you are infected, avoid sexual contact, and see a health care provider immediately.



Chlamydia causes a build-up of scar tissue that can block the fallopian tube and prevent fertilization.

Mission Statement

The Pat Walker Health Center, University Health Services provides professional and comprehensive medical care, mental health care, health education, and health promotion for a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff. We, the University Health Services Staff of the Pat Walker Health Center, have a commitment to physical, mental, spiritual, social, and emotional health, the highest standards of quality, and appreciation of the value of each individual. Through these endeavors we support the educational mission of the University of Arkansas and the growth of each individual.

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**Accreditation Association
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*A Member of
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Last updated July 2005



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What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by *Chlamydia trachomatis*, a bacterium, which can damage a woman's reproductive organs. Because symptoms of chlamydia are mild or absent, serious complications that can cause irreversible damage, including infertility, can occur "silently" before a woman ever recognizes a problem.

How Do People Get Chlamydia?

Chlamydia can be transmitted during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Chlamydia can also be passed from an infected mother to her newborn during vaginal childbirth.

How Common is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is the most frequently reported bacterial sexually transmitted infection in the United States. Under reporting is substantial because most people with chlamydia are not aware of their infections and do not seek testing.

What Are the Symptoms of Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is known as a "silent" disease because three quarters of infected women and half of infected men have no symptoms. The infection is frequently not diagnosed or treated until complications develop. *In women*, the bacteria initially attack the cervix and the urethra.



The few women with symptoms might have an abnormal vaginal discharge or a burning sensation when urinating.

When the infection spreads from the cervix to the fallopian tubes, some women still have no signs or symptoms; others have lower abdominal pain, low back pain, nausea, fever, pain during intercourse, and bleeding between menstrual periods. Whenever the infection spreads past the cervix into the upper reproductive system, permanent and irreversible damage can occur.

Men with signs or symptoms might have a discharge from the penis and a burning sensation when urinating. Men might also have burning and itching around the opening of the penis and swelling in the testicles, or both.

How Soon After Exposure Do Symptoms Appear?

If symptoms do occur, they usually appear within 1 to 3 weeks of exposure. Remember Chlamydia can cause problems even if you have no symptoms.

How Is Chlamydia Diagnosed?

Chlamydia testing can be done by collecting a specimen from the infected site (cervix or penis) or by a urine test. A Pap test is not a test for chlamydia.

Who Is At Risk for Chlamydia?

Sexually active men and women can be exposed to chlamydia bacteria during sexual contact with an infected person. The more sex partners a person has, the greater the risk.

Sexually active young women are especially susceptible to chlamydia bacteria because of the characteristics of the cells that form the lining of the cervical canal.

Babies are at risk of acquiring a chlamydia infection from their infected mother.

What is the Treatment for Chlamydia?

Chlamydia can be easily treated and cured with antibiotics. All sex partners must also be treated.

What complications can Result from Untreated Chlamydia?

Untreated chlamydia infection may progress to serious reproductive and other health problems with both short-term and long-term consequences. Like the disease itself, the damage that chlamydia causes is often "silent".

In men, untreated chlamydia can cause urethral infections. Infection sometimes spreads to the epididymis (a tube that carries sperm from the testis), causing pain, fever, and, potentially, infertility.

In women, the chlamydia bacteria often infect the cells of the cervix. If not treated, the infection can spread into the uterus or fallopian tubes and cause an infection called pelvic inflammatory disease which may cause infertility.

