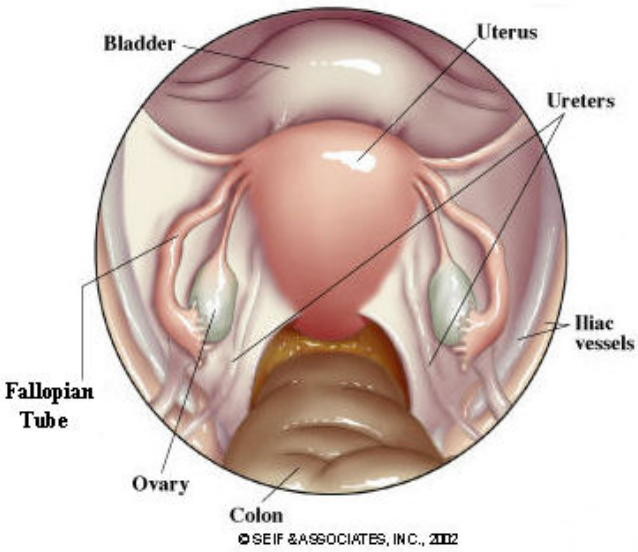
Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)

PID is an infection in some or all of your female organs. This includes the womb (*uterus*), ovaries, tubes and tissues in the pelvis. PID is a common cause of sudden onset (*acute*) lower abdominal (*pelvic*) pain. Birth control pills (*oral contraceptives*) decrease PID by 50% with the exception of chlamydia and AIDS. PID can be treated, but it is a serious infection. It may take weeks before you are completely well. In some cases, hospitalization is needed for surgery or to administer IV antibiotics.



CAUSES

- It may be caused by germs that are spread during sexual contact.
- PID can also occur following:
  - Birth of baby.
  - Miscarriage.
  - Abortion.
  - Major surgery of the pelvis.
  - Use of an IUD.
  - Sexual assault.

SYMPTOMS

- Abdominal or pelvic pain.
- Fever.
- Chills.
- Abnormal vaginal discharge.

DIAGNOSIS

Your caregiver will choose some of these methods to make a diagnosis:

- Physical exam and history.
- Blood tests.
- Cultures of the vagina and cervix.
- X-rays or ultrasound.
- Procedure to look inside the pelvis (*laparoscopy*).

TREATMENT

- Use of antibiotics by mouth or intravenously.
- Treatment of sexual partners when the infection is an STD (*sexually transmitted disease*).
- Hospitalization and surgery may be needed.

RISKS AND COMPLICATIONS:

- PID can cause women to become unable to have children (*sterile*) if left untreated or if half-treated. That is why it is important to finish ALL medications given to you.
- Sterility or future tubal (*ectopic*) pregnancies can occur in fully treated individuals. This is why it is so important to follow your prescribed treatment.
- It can cause longstanding (*chronic*) pelvic pain after frequent infections.
- Painful intercourse.
- Pelvic abscesses.
- In rare cases, surgery and even hysterectomy may be needed.

- If this is a sexually transmitted infection, you are also at risk for any other sexually transmitted disease including AIDS (*HIV*).

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS:

- Finish all medication as prescribed. Incomplete treatment will put you at risk for sterility and tubal pregnancy.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Rest.
- Eat a balanced diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Warm sitz baths can help the pelvic pain.
- Do not have sex until treatment is completed and you have followed up at your caregiver's office or the clinic to which you were referred. If your *diagnosis* (learning what is wrong) is confirmed by culture or other method of confirmation, your recent sexual contacts need treatment. Even if they are symptom free or have a negative culture or evaluation, they should be treated.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop pelvic pain.
- You have abnormal vaginal discharge.
- You need prescription medication for your pain.
- Your partner has an STD.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop an oral temperature above 100° F (38.1° C) or as your caregiver suggests, which lasts for 2 days or longer and is not controlled by medications.
- You notice an increase in pain.
- You develop chills with a fever.

TEST RESULTS

For the protection of your privacy, test results can not be given over the phone. Make sure you receive the results of your test. Ask how to obtain these results if you have not been informed. **It is your responsibility to obtain your test results.**

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