Gonorrhea, Females and Males

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease. **In females**, this is an infection in some or all female organs such as the:

- Vagina.
- Cervix.
- Urethra.
- Uterus (womb).
- Ovaries.
- Tubes.
- Rectum.
- And also seen in the mouth.

In females, it is often called pelvic inflammatory disease or PID. PID is a common cause of sudden lower abdominal pain, fever and chills. PID is caused by germs that are spread in the pelvic organs during sexual contact. It also may cause a pus-like discharge from the vagina. PID can be treated, but it is a serious infection that can cause infertility and long time pelvic pain. It may take weeks before you are completely well. In some cases, hospitalization is needed. PID may also be passed to a newborn baby's eyes when traveling through an infected birth canal.

In males, gonorrhea most often causes *urethritis*. When gonorrhea causes urethritis, there may be burning or pain with urination. This happens when gonorrhea infects the urethra (the tube that carries the urine out of the bladder). It usually causes a pus-like discharge from the penis and pain in the testicle. It may also infect the tubes that carry the sperm from the testicle and cause you to be sterile (cannot get someone pregnant).

Gonorrhea in pregnant women can cause problems, such as:

- Premature rupture of the membranes.
- Premature delivery.
- Miscarriage.
- Birth defects.
- Eye infection in the baby.
- Death of the baby.

Other facts you should know:

- If left untreated or only half-treated, PID can cause women to become sterile (not able to have children). That is why it is important to be treated as soon as possible and FINISH ALL MEDICATIONS.
- Sterility or future ectopic (tubal) pregnancies can occur in fully treated people.
- Gonorrhea can cause chronic (long-lasting) pelvic pain after frequent infections.
- This is a sexually transmitted infection. You are also at risk for other sexually transmitted diseases including chlamydia, syphilis, trichomonas and HIV (AIDS).
- Your sex partner needs to be examined and treated also if infected.

CAUSE:

Gonorrhea is cause by bacteria germs that are spread during sexual contact of the genital organs, mouth or rectum.

SYMPTOMS:

FEMALES:

- Abnormal vaginal discharge.
- Painful intercourse.
- Burning or itching of the vagina and lips of the vagina.
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding especially after intercourse.
- Abdominal pain.
- Fever with or without chills.
- Pain when urinating.
- Irritation, pain or bleeding of the rectum.

MALES:

- Discharge from the penis.
- Painful or burning urination.
- Rectal pain, irritation or bleeding.

DIAGNOSIS:

Diagnosis is made by examination of the patient, looking at the discharge under the microscope, and culture of

the vaginal discharge and blood tests if necessary.

TREATMENT:

- Antibiotics that kill the gonorrhea germs.
- Your sex partner should also be examined and treated if necessary.
- It is important to diagnose and treat gonorrhea as soon as possible to prevent damage to the female or male organs and prevent harm to the baby in pregnant women.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Rest and eat a balanced diet with plenty of fluids.
- Inform anyone you may have had sexual contact.
- Have a monogamous (one sex partner) relationship.
- Be sure your sex partner is not having sexual intercourse with others.
- Use condoms during sexual intercourse.

WARNING: IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU:

- **Finish all medication as prescribed.** Not finishing it will put you at risk for sterility and tubal pregnancy. If one sexually transmitted disease is discovered, often treatment will be started to cover other possible infections. This may be done even if other infections are not proven with testing.
- **Not have sex until treatment is completed. Do not have sex until you have followed up at your caregiver's office or clinic.** If your test is positive, your recent sexual partners will need treatment. They need treatment even if they are symptom (problem) free. They still need treatment even if they have a negative culture or exam.
- Get your 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 as to how these results are to be obtained if you have not been informed. **It is your responsibility to obtain your test results.**

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop an oral temperature above 100° F (37.8° C) lasting for 2 days or longer not controlled by medicine or as your caregiver suggests.
- You develop increase in pain in your abdomen or testicles in the male.
- You develop any type of abnormal discharge.
- You develop vaginal bleeding after intercourse or other than during your menstrual period.
- You have painful intercourse.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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