



Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) Fact Sheet

Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) is a serious infection in women, caused by gonorrhea, chlamydia, or other bacteria. PID is a leading cause of infertility (inability to have children) among women.

Q: How do you get PID?

A: When chlamydia or gonorrhea passes from a man to a woman during vaginal sex, PID can develop. The bacteria can move into the uterus (womb) and surrounding area, where they cause infection and pain, and sometimes leave internal scars.

Q: What are the signs and symptoms of PID?

A:

- Mild or severe pain in the lower stomach, particularly during sex
- Pain in the lower back
- Fever, chills, or vomiting
- Unusual bleeding or fluid from the vagina that looks, feels, or smells different

 **WOMEN CAN HAVE PID WITHOUT ANY OF THE ABOVE SYMPTOMS.**

Q: Is PID serious?

A: **Yes! PID can cause many long-term problems:**

- Scarring and blockage in the tubes (part of the female reproductive system) that can cause infertility;
- Scarring around the womb, tubes, and ovaries that can cause chronic pain;
- Pregnancy in the tubes, instead of in the uterus, that may require emergency surgery, and can cause death;
- Each time a woman has PID, her chance of a future pregnancy is lowered.

Q: How is PID treated?

A:

- Your doctor or nurse will give you medicine to cure the infection. You may need to go to the hospital for treatment if PID is severe.
- If you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant, be sure to tell your doctor or nurse.
- Your partner(s) must be treated even if they have no symptoms. If they are not treated, they can give the infection back to you, or infect others.


Q: How do I avoid getting PID?

- A:**
- Abstinence (not having sex) is the only sure way to avoid infection.
 - Plan Ahead:** Think about protecting yourself. Talk with your sex partner(s) about STDs and the need to protect yourself. Then, you can choose not to have sex (abstinence), or decide to:
 - Use a male condom with each sex partner;
 - Use a female condom when a male condom cannot be used.
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HIV IS ALSO A STD!

When you catch an STD, you could also be getting HIV.

Birth control pills or a birth control shot cannot protect you against STDs.

 **USING LATEX CONDOMS CORRECTLY EVERY TIME YOU HAVE SEX CAN REDUCE THE CHANCE FOR GETTING PID, HIV, AND OTHER STDs.**

Q: Where can I get more information about STDs and referrals for STD testing?

- A:**
- **Phone:** Talk to a trained operator who can answer your questions and provide information about STD testing. **In English and Español 24 hours/day, 7 days/week:** Toll-free: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636); TTY for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing: 1-888-232-6348
 - **Internet:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/std/>
http://www.cdc.gov/std/healthcomm/fact_sheets.htm

Talk to your own health care provider, or call your county health department by looking for the telephone number in the phone book (white pages) under county government. Ask to speak to someone in the STD clinic or STD program for more information about PID