

Chlamydia Test

This is an In-Vitro Diagnostic Screening Test For Home Use. For External use only.

What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia comes from the Greek word meaning 'to cloak' and is caused by bacteria called chlamydia trachomatis. Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted disease in young adults. In 2003 there were 89,818 cases of chlamydia reported, a rise of 9% on the previous year.

Why do I need this test?

This test looks for the presence of the bacteria chlamydia trachomatis in urine. It is important that you test for chlamydia as it doesn't always produce symptoms but left untreated can cause infertility and ectopic pregnancy. Chlamydia is easily treated with a course of antibiotics so preventing any long term health problems.

If chlamydia infection is suspected, you should avoid sexual intercourse until the test results have come back. If results indicate a chlamydia infection, avoid sexual intercourse for 7 days after the start of treatment. Your sexual partner should also be treated for a chlamydia infection to avoid re-infecting you or to avoid infecting others.

How is chlamydia spread?

Chlamydia is passed on during unprotected sexual intercourse, so if you have had unprotected sex you are at risk of being infected. Chlamydia is spread by having unprotected anal, vaginal or oral sex with someone who is infected. A mother can pass chlamydia to her baby at birth, this is why we recommend you get yourself tested if you are planning pregnancy. Chlamydia tends to infect women more than men, this is because women hold germs and fluids from male partners inside them for some time after sex.

What are the symptoms of chlamydia?

As mentioned previously chlamydia does not always have symptoms and symptoms if present can be mistaken for something less serious, such as thrush. Men are more likely to have symptoms than women, but they may have no symptoms either.

In women symptoms may include: -

- An increase in vaginal discharge.
- Lower abdominal pain.
- Pain on urinating.
- Pain during sex.
- Bleeding between periods or after sex.

In men symptoms may include: -

- A discharge from the tip of the penis.
- Pain on urinating because the urethra is inflamed.
- Swelling of the testes (testicles).

If chlamydia infects the eyes, you may experience pain, swelling and irritation.

What does the test involve?

The test is simple and all that is required is a urine sample in the provided sample bottle. We recommend that you take your urine specimen first thing in the morning and post as soon as possible after collection.

What is included in the test?

- A double pocketed plastic bag containing a press down plastic protection case in case of leakage.
- A urine sample bottle - this can be found inside the press down plastic protection case.
- A prepaid envelope addressed to Clinical Trials Processing, Quest Diagnostics, Unit B1 Parkway West, Cranford Lane, Heston, Middlesex TW5 9QA.
- A coloured plastic seal for the pre—paid envelope.
- Instructions.
- Customer Information Form, this must be returned with your urine sample.
- Contents List

The sample bottle has a number on the side, this is your reference number, this number should also appear on your customer information form and all numbers should be exactly the same as the one below:

This is your unique number in case you need to contact us. If the numbers are different then please contact us. You should keep these instructions with your number on it after you have posted your sample.

How to carry out the chlamydia test:

Please make sure you read all these instructions carefully before carrying out the test and follow them exactly. To provide you with a fast service your results can be sent to you in three ways, email, telephone or post. We will not send out any further

instructions so you should ensure you keep these safe to help you read your result. You should also read the advice on what to do with your result.

When collecting your urine sample wait until at least two hours have passed since you last passed urine. It is usually easier to collect urine first thing in the morning when your urine is at its most concentrated. This urine is called "early morning first-catch urine", this means when you go to the toilet first thing in the morning you take a sample from the first few drops of urine.

1. Remove all the items from the plastic bag.
2. Take the plastic protection case out of the bag and remove the urine sample bottle.
3. Carefully unscrew the lid from the urine sample bottle. Start to urinate into the bottle, ensuring you catch the first drops of urine which you pass. Continue until the bottle is full to the line on the sample bottle marked 20ml. Once you have collected the specimen continue to urinate into the toilet.
4. Screw the lid back on to the urine bottle tightly to avoid leakage during transport.
5. If there is any urine on the outside of the bottle wipe off with a tissue.
6. On the bottle there is a label, in the spaces provided ensure you write in your name, date and time of collection. If these details are not on the sample bottle the laboratory will not carry out the test. Make sure the reference number is still on the bottle.
7. Place the urine sample back into the press down plastic case and press firmly around the capsule edges to seal the case.
8. Place the plastic capsule back into the back pocket of the plastic bag.
9. Fill in your details on the customer information form making sure you enter all details clearly.
10. Once the form is completed, place it in the front pocket of the plastic bag and then remove the red adhesive strip from the plastic bag and press down firmly to seal. You will then need to place the plastic bag into the pre-paid envelope.
11. To seal the envelope you will need to fold over the top of the envelope so that the 2nd and 3rd holes match up. Place the stud on the plastic clip through the holes and then fold over and push down firmly to seal.
12. The envelope is now ready to be posted. Post it as soon as you can (the postage is pre-paid).

The laboratory is closed Sundays and bank holidays so to minimize the chances of any delay in processing your sample, we advise that you collect a urine sample in the morning, Sunday to Thursday and post it as soon as possible after collection.

The urine sample should not be kept at room temperature for longer than is necessary so if there is any delay in posting your sample, please place it in the fridge (not freezer).

Limitations/cross reactions:

* Do not carry out this test during your period, if there are high levels of red blood cells in the urine sample this could interfere with the analysis and produce a false positive.

* Do not urinate for two hours before collecting your test sample

* Lubricants such as Replens® have been shown to inhibit the analysis and may result in false negative results. If you use lubricants we recommend that you wash and remove all possible traces prior to collecting your urine sample.

* The Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test that is carried out on your sample does not replace the gynaecological examination and associated tests needed to diagnose other infections involving the womb or other parts of the uro-genital tract, nor does it replace the examination and tests needed to diagnose severe chlamydia infection

Interpretation of Results:

The PCR test that your urine sample will be tested with is one of the most accurate tests available at present. There are 4 possible results that you could get:

PCR NEGATIVE: This means that the bacteria chlamydia trachomatis was not detected in the urine sample you provided. However, it is important to remember that no matter how good a test on rare occasions you can get a negative result, when you do in fact have the infection. If you remain concerned, we recommend that you attend your local GUM (Genito-Urinary Medicine) clinic or consult your doctor. If you have a repeat test done, it may give a different result depending on what specimen and test methods are used.

PCR POSITIVE: This means that you almost certainly have Chlamydia infection and you will need to start treatment with a course of antibiotics as soon as you can. There is the possibility that you could have a positive result when you do not have the infection, but this is very rare with the test methods used. If you receive a positive result we recommend that you attend your local GUM (Genito-Urinary Medicine) clinic or your doctor. A GUM clinic will provide you with free, confidential advice and treatment. Most of the clinics have health advisers who regularly experience a wide range of problems and can spend more time with you than a doctor. You can find details of your nearest clinic in the telephone directory or via your local hospital. When phoning up to

make an appointment make sure you state if you would prefer to see a male or a female doctor. When you attend your appointment ensure you take your result letter with you. If you have a repeat test done, it may give a different result depending on what specimen and test methods are used.

If you are treated for chlamydia you must make sure that you finish the course of treatment and ensure that your partner(s) is also treated, to avoid getting infected again. During treatment you should avoid sexual intercourse to avoid re-infection.

PCR EQUIVOCAL: This occurs when the laboratory cannot provide a definite result. This can be because other substances in the sample, for example blood in the urine, or certain medications are affecting the result. High levels of the hormone HCG which occurs during pregnancy can also cause equivocal results.

In these cases the safest course of action is to repeat the test on a fresh sample. In the event of an equivocal result a new test will be sent to you automatically. If you do not receive the new test within 7 days then please contact us: Remember, it is always best to collect your urine sample first thing in the morning.

SAMPLE OUT OF PROTOCOL: This means that the sample was more than 4 days old when it arrived in the laboratory for testing. In the event of an out of protocol result a new test will be sent to you automatically. If you do not receive the new test within 7 days then please contact us.

If you do not receive your results within 10 days of posting the sample please contact us by e-mailing:

results@homehealth-uk.com

This screening test relies upon detection in a biological system therefore it is possible that it may not be 100% accurate in every case. On occasions the test may produce a false positive or a false negative result. As with all screening tests therapeutic decisions should not be based on any single result or method. In the case of unexpected results or symptoms consult your doctor or GUM clinic for advice.

How can chlamydia be prevented?

The only way to be sure of avoiding chlamydia and other sexually transmitted diseases, is with the consistent use of condoms. To prevent infection the condom must be put on correctly and before any genital contact. If you and your partner want to stop using condoms then we recommend that you both have a test either by home testing or by visiting a GUM clinic.

Remember, just because you have had chlamydia once doesn't mean you will not get it again. Every time you have unprotected sex you are at risk of contracting chlamydia and other sexually transmitted diseases.

How is chlamydia treated?

Chlamydia is treated with antibiotics that destroy the germs in your body. If you are treated for chlamydia you must make sure that you finish the course of treatment and ensure that your partner is also checked and treated, to avoid getting infected again. During treatment you should avoid sexual intercourse to avoid re-infection.

What are the effects of untreated chlamydia?

In women, if chlamydia is left untreated the bacteria may spread into the pelvic area and infect the cervix, fallopian tubes and ovaries leading to a disease called pelvic inflammatory disease. This disease can lead to many complications including infertility.

If a woman has chlamydia during pregnancy she will risk having an ectopic pregnancy, early labour or passing the infection on to her baby, which would cause the baby to develop an eye infection or pneumonia.

In men, chlamydia can cause a painful swelling of the testicles, which could also cause infertility as well as a serious joint and eye disorder (Reiter's disease). Reiter's disease is a condition affecting mainly men and causes inflammation to the joints (arthritis), the urethra and often the eyes.

I am too embarrassed to go to a GUM clinic so where else can I go?

You should never feel embarrassed about attending a GUM clinic, everyone is there for the same reason and these doctors are experienced in this area of medicine. However if you prefer not to attend a GUM clinic you may go to your local doctor. When attending your appointment take the result of the test with you and they will be able to give you an appropriate course of antibiotics.

REMEMBER: If the test is positive be sure to consult your doctor for antibiotics.

If you have any queries regarding this test then please contact us, at any time via email :
results@homehealth-uk.com

If you want more information on any other aspects of sexual health or other health topics, visit our website www.homehealth-uk.com. Our website contains thousands of pages of health information and advice.



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