PATIENT INFORMATION:
Gonorrhea Treatment for Your Partners

EPT
EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY

Why am I getting extra medicine or a prescription?

- You have been diagnosed with gonorrhea (gon-uh-REE-uh). It is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). That means it is transmitted or spread through oral, vaginal, or anal sex with an infected person.
- You have been given prescriptions for cefixime (su-FIX-eem) and azithromycin (uh-zith-ro-MY-sin), or the medicines, to treat (cure) your gonorrhea. You also were given the same prescriptions or medicines to give to your sex partners. Bringing medicines to your partners this way is called Expedited Partner Therapy, or EPT. Once your partners are treated, they won't develop serious health problems, infect you again, or pass gonorrhea on to others.

What do I need to know about gonorrhea?

- Most people with gonorrhea don't have any symptoms (signs of infection). You can be infected and not know it.
- Or, you may have discharge (drip) from the penis, vagina and/or anus, pain, or a burning feeling when you urinate (pee).
- If you don't get treated, you may develop serious, even life-long health problems.
- If you don't get treated and you are female, you may not be able to get pregnant.
- Pregnant women with gonorrhea can pass the infection to their babies during pregnancy.

What should I do next?

- **Get treated.**
- **Tell all your recent sex partners**. Explain that you have been diagnosed with gonorrhea and got medicines to treat it. They need medicines, too.
- **Give them the medicines or prescriptions and the printed information** from your health care provider.
- **Encourage your partners to visit a health care provider**. They should get tested for other STIs, even if they take the EPT medicines.
- **Visit a health care provider in 3 months** to get tested again for gonorrhea.

How do I tell my partners I was treated for gonorrhea?

Telling your partners that you have an STI can be hard, but it is the right thing to do. The best way to tell your partners is by being open and honest.

"These medicines (or prescriptions) are to cure an STI called gonorrhea. I took the medicines, and you should, too, since you also might have the infection. You should read the information that came with the medicines and go to a health care provider to get checked for other STIs."

Your partners may feel surprised, upset, angry, or scared. These feelings are normal. By offering them the EPT medicines, you are showing that you care enough to help.

What if my partner blames me?

People worry about their partners being angry, but you may not be the one who infected them. Explain that chlamydia usually doesn't have symptoms. A person can have it for a long time and not know it. The most important thing is to tell your partners about the infection. Take steps so that you and your sex partners get healthy, and avoid future STIs.

Reasons why EPT might not be a good choice for your partner

Ask your health care provider about ways to get your partners treated other than EPT if:

- You think a partner could become violent.
- You also have been diagnosed with an STI other than gonorrhea.
- Your partner is a man who has sex with other men. He may have other infections, like syphilis and/or HIV. He should visit a health care provider as soon as possible to get tested for other STIs.

Avoid STIs in the Future

The only way to completely avoid STIs, including HIV, is not to have sex. If you do have sex, do it safely. **Use a latex condom every time and for every kind of sex - anal and vaginal, and a condom or dental dam for oral sex.**

You can lower your chances or getting STIs, including HIV, by limiting the number of people you have sex with. The more sex partners you have, the higher your risk of getting an STI.

Other Questions You May Have.

My sex partners have no symptoms. Should they still take the medicines?

Yes. People with gonorrhea may not have any symptoms. Taking the medicines will cure it.

What if my sex partner is pregnant or thinks she may be pregnant?

If your sex partner is pregnant or thinks she may be pregnant, it is okay for her to take these medicines. The medicines used to treat gonorrhea will not hurt the baby. But she should see a health care provider as soon as possible to be tested for other STIs, which she can pass on to her baby during pregnancy.

What should I do after giving my partners these medicines?

The medicine takes 7 days to work. Do not have sex (vaginal, oral, or anal) for at least 7 days after both you and your partners have been treated. You can get gonorrhea again if you have sex before the medicines cure your partners. If you do have sex, use a latex condom or dental dam (for oral sex) so you don't get infected again.

What if a partner won't take the medicine?

If your sex partner won't take the medicine, he or she should see a health car provider as soon as possible to get tested for gonorrhea , chlamydia, and other STIs. Tell your partners that not getting treated could result in serious health problems.

MARYLAND
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Center for STI Prevention
www.tinyurl.com/EPTMaryland
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