The test for a chlamydia infection cannot tell you how long, when and by whom you were infected.

An infection therefore does not necessarily mean that your partner has been cheating.

#### Is there a treatment?

A chlamydia infection that is detected in good time will resolve without any lasting damage if you receive adequate treatment. Treatment is with antibiotics, which are generally well tolerated. Only if the infection is left untreated or treated too late may there by longer term damage, such as infertility.

As with all sexually transmitted diseases, sexual partners must also be treated, as they may also be infected.

Avoid unprotected intercourse (without a condom or dental dam) for as long as the treatment lasts.

#### For statutory health insurance holders:

Some medical services cannot be covered by health insurance companies or cannot be covered in every case (e.g. at the patient's own request) and must therefore be paid by the patient.

Please refer to the order form for individual healthcare services for the current prices.

#### For private health insurance holders:

Private health insurance will cover the costs according to the valid GOÄ if there has been no previous exclusion of benefits. If you have any questions about this, your doctor will be happy to advise you.

# Chlamydia infection Chlamydia trachomatis









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#### What is Chlamydia trachomatis?

Chlamydia trachomatis is a sexually transmitted bacterium that colonises the genital area and multiplies in human cells. A chlamydia infection is one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases worldwide. It affects men and women alike.

In Germany, sexually active adolescents and young adults are particularly affected. Approximately 10–20 % of young women

are infected. As neither the disease nor the detection of the pathogen are notifiable, the infection rate can only be estimated. The exception here is Chlamydia trachomatis serotype L1 to L3. In future, an anonymous report is to be made to the RKI (Robert Koch Institute).

## How is chlamydia spread?

Transmission occurs during unprotected sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal or oral) through contact of infected body fluids (urine, vaginal secretions, semen or tears) with the mucous membranes. Sharing sex toys can also lead to transmission.

However, infection through kissing is not possible as chlamydia is not found in saliva.

# What symptoms can occur?

In many cases, a chlamydia infection occurs without symptoms and therefore often remains undetected for a long time or is completely overlooked. In around 80 % of women and around 50 % of men, infections are asymptomatic.

If symptoms do occur, they can appear after 1-3 weeks.

**Women** may experience burning, itching and yellowish or purulent discharge when urinating. The fallopian tubes and ovaries are also frequently affected. Inflammation of the fallopian tubes (adnexitis) can cause fever and abdominal pain. However, inflammation of the liver (perihepatitis) can also occur as a result. Untreated infections can lead to irreversible adhesions and scarring of the fallopian tubes. This may result in an associated ectopic pregnancy and infertility.

#### Special features during pregnancy

Undetected chlamydia infections can lead to miscarriages, premature labour and premature births during pregnancy. If an infection is detected, antibiotic treatment can also be administered during pregnancy.

For this reason, screening for chlamydia has been part of the prenatal care programme for years.

The pathogen can be passed from the infected mother to her newborn at birth. If the children are infected, they suffer from purulent conjunctivitis, which takes months to heal. Pneumonia can also occur.

**Men** suffer from inflammation of the urethra with similar symptoms to women (purulent discharge, itching or burning when urinating). Inflammation of the urethra and prostate can also lead to infertility in men.

Rarely, inflammation of the conjunctiva can occur. Reactive inflammation of the joints (arthritis) can also occur after a chlamydia infection

# How can I protect myself?

The risk of infection increases with the number of sexual partners. The use of condoms or dental dams significantly reduces this risk. Please note that the pill does not protect against infection with sexually transmitted diseases!

# How is the diagnosis made?

The gold standard for identifying an infection is molecular biological detection (PCR) from the first void (5 ml) of morning urine (no midstream urine). A swab of the cervix in women and a swab of the urethra in men is also possible.

