



A Message for Partners about Chlamydia Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT)

From the Massachusetts Department of Public Health August 29, 2011

Important information about your sexual health: Please read both sides of this sheet carefully.

If you have any questions about the medicine for chlamydia, please contact your doctor or nurse.

For more information about chlamydia and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), visit the Massachusetts Department of Public Health website at www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/std.

Why am I getting medicine or a prescription for medicine?

Your sex partner has recently been treated for a sexually transmitted disease (STD) called **chlamydia**. You may have it too. That's why your sex partner is bringing you a prescription or medicine to treat chlamydia. You should take this medicine as soon as possible.

What is chlamydia and what are the signs and symptoms?

Chlamydia is a very common infection that both men and women can get from having vaginal, anal, or oral sex. For most people, there are no symptoms. But if you have the infection, even if there are no symptoms, you can still pass it on to anyone you have sex with.

Women with signs or symptoms might have:

- *Yellow or white discharge from the vagina*
- *Pain or bleeding during or after sex*
- *Bleeding between periods*
- *Burning or pain when you pee*
- *Lower belly pain, cramps and back pain*
- *Nausea*
- *Fever*

Men with signs or symptoms might have:

- *Yellow or white discharge (drip) from the penis*
- *Burning or pain when you pee*
- *Burning or itching at the opening of the penis*
- *Pain or swelling in the testicles (balls)*

What is the cure for chlamydia?

Chlamydia is usually cured with one dose of an antibiotic called azithromycin. This dose of medicine does not treat other STDs like syphilis or gonorrhea.

Today you are being given one dose of azithromycin, or a prescription to get it from the drug store. Before you take this medicine, please read all of the following information carefully.

1. If you have any of these problems, you must see a doctor or nurse as soon as possible because you may need stronger medicine.

- *Belly pain*
- *Nausea*
- *Fever*
- *Cramps*
- *Throwing up*
- *Pain in the testicles (balls)*

2. Do not take this medicine before checking with your own doctor or pharmacist if:

- You are allergic to any medicines
- You have serious health problems, such as kidney, heart, liver disease, or seizures

If you cannot take this medicine because of other health problems or allergies, see your doctor or nurse as soon as possible to get the best chlamydia treatment for you.

3. How do I take this medicine?

- Take *all* the medicine at once by mouth.
- If you throw up in the hour after taking the medicine, you will need to get more medicine from your clinic, doctor, or nurse because the medicine did not have time to work.
- Do not share this medicine with anyone else.

4. What if I am pregnant, or think I may be pregnant?

Azithromycin will not hurt your baby. Chlamydia can be passed from a mother to her baby during pregnancy and can cause health problems for the baby. If you are pregnant, take the medicine and see your doctor or nurse as soon as you can. Tell them you were treated because your sex partner has chlamydia.

5. What should I do after taking this medicine?

- **Do not have vaginal, anal, or oral sex for at least seven days after you AND any of your sex partner(s) have taken this medicine.** It takes seven days for this medicine to cure chlamydia. You can get chlamydia again if you have sex before waiting for the medicine to work on you and your partner(s).
- **Get checked for other STDs.** This medicine does not treat other STDs. Even if you take this medicine, it is important to get tested for other STDs because people can have more than one at a time. Get checked by your doctor or nurse for gonorrhea, syphilis, and HIV.

6. What might happen if I don't take this medicine?

Chlamydia that is not treated can lead to infertility (not being able to have children). In women, untreated chlamydia can cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID), which can be very painful. In men, chlamydia that is not treated can cause infection and pain in the testicles.

7. What are the common side effects of this medicine?

Some side effects of azithromycin include diarrhea, nausea, belly pain, headache, and throwing up. Remember that if you throw up in the hour after taking your medicine, you need to get more medicine.

8. What if I have an allergic reaction after taking this medicine?

Very serious allergic reactions are rare, but can happen.

If you have any of these problems after taking this medicine, call 911 or go to the emergency room:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trouble breathing/chest tightness• Closing of the throat | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swelling of the lips or tongue• Hives (bumps on the skin that itch) |
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If you had an allergic reaction: when you feel better, send an e-mail to ept@state.ma.us so that the Department of Public Health can find out how many people had problems with the medicine.

How can chlamydia be prevented?

The only way to avoid chlamydia and other STDs including HIV, is not to have sex. If you do have sex, using a condom correctly EVERY TIME you have any kind of sex can lower the chances of you getting an STD. Getting screened for STDs at least once a year is also a great way to stay healthy.