

GONORRHOEA

Gonorrhoea is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) which is contracted through sexual activity, which means contact between the genital organs or the genital organ and the mucous membrane in the mouth or rectum. This infection is very contagious and is caused by the gonococci bacteria. Gonococci thrive in the mucous membrane and are most often found in the genital organs, urethra, rectum and throat. The bacteria can often be spread to the blood and other body organs, causing inflammation. Today, gonorrhoea is a rare disease in Norway but it is more common in other parts of the world.

Proper use of a condom will protect against catching the disease. The condom must be on during the entire intercourse.

SYMPTOMS

Most infected men will show gonorrhoea symptoms after one or two days, or within one week. There will be a burning sensation when urinating and there will be a yellow discharge from the penis, often a large amount. Gonorrhoea may spread to the appendix testicles (epididymis) in men and cause sterility.

Women can have similar symptoms as men and may also have discharge from the vagina. The symptoms are weaker and often there is so little discomfort that the symptoms might go unnoticed. Women may have irregular bleeding. In women gonorrhoea can spread to the fallopian tubes and cause sterility.

If a woman has gonorrhoea when she gives birth, the baby may contract an eye infection. In newborn infants, untreated gonorrhoea can lead to blindness in just a few days.

EXAMINATION

Gonorrhoea tests are taken with a cotton swab from the urethra and the cervix, and alternatively from the throat and rectum. Culture tests are taken and sent to the laboratory for analysis.

TREATMENT

Gonorrhoea is treated with antibiotics. All patients must return for a check-up after one to two weeks. New laboratory tests will then be taken to ascertain whether the patient is cured.

An infected person must not have sex before having a check-up after treatment and having been declared healthy.

FREE EXAMINATION AND TREATMENT

Gonorrhoea is defined as a contagious disease in the Act relating to control of communicable diseases. Therefore anyone suffering from this disease is entitled to a free examination and treatment. It is important to inform current and former partners that you have been infected. The doctor and patient must cooperate on tracing all sexual contacts of the patient to establish if any have been infected and require treatment.