

Gonorrhoea



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Gonorrhoea Introduction: Gonorrhoea is one of the longest known diseases caused by the bacterium *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. This disease is transmitted through sex. According to the estimates recorded in MedicineNet (2011, p. 2), number of women currently infected with this disease exceeds one million, of which, between 25 per cent and 40 per cent also have another type of sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by chlamydia.

Regions of infection: It is wrongly believed that gonorrhoea is transmitted through handles of the doors or toilet seats. The bacterium responsible for this infection is very sensitive to the environment and grows only in favorable circumstances and suitable conditions. *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* can not survive for more than few seconds if taken outside the body. It does not live upon exposed skin. This bacterium requires moist conditions and temperature of the internal body in order to survive, grow and reproduce. The most suitable place for this bacterium to live in is vagina and cervix which is essentially the terminal point of uterus protruding into vagina. *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* also survives in urethra and rectum. Apart from these areas, *neisseria gonorrhoeae* can also be found at the back of throat which is the point of contact in oral sex.

Symptoms: The disease shows no symptoms in the early stages in 50 per cent of the cases. With the passage of time, the patient experiences frequent urination, swelling, burning and redness of the genitals, discharge of a yellowish mucus from the vagina, and a lot of itching on and around the genitals. If adequate treatment is not taken in time, the swelling can aggravate to dangerous extent and lead to severe and extremely painful pelvic infection. The infection causes the ovaries and Fallopian tubes to swell up. As a result of the inflammation of Fallopian tubes, the patient acquires pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) which is essentially a very painful pelvis

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infection. PID is not very unusual to occur. This can be estimated from the fact that between 10 per cent and 40 per cent of the women experiencing gonorrhoea acquire PID particularly when the infection occurs in the uterine cervix (MedicineNet, 2011, p. 2). Some of the most common symptoms of pelvic infection are abdominal pain, fever, pain while doing sex and pelvic cramping. If a woman acquires pelvic infection, she may experience difficulties in pregnancy. Diagnosis: Gonorrhoea is tested by swabbing the infection area. The bacterium is identified through the material's culturing from swab. "The culture test involves placing a sample of the discharge onto a culture plate and incubating it up to 2 days to allow the bacteria to grow" (Cornforth, 2004). Treatment: Up to \$6 million are spent for treatment of gonorrhoea in US on annual basis (Jordan, 1980, p. 857). If the infection has sufficiently spread and due treatment is not taken in time, pus forms over the area of infection which can only be removed through surgery. Treatment of gonorrhoea is not very complicated. The patient is prescribed an antibiotic that may be taken in injection, liquid, or tablet form. References: Cornforth, T. (2004). How is Gonorrhoea Diagnosed? Retrieved from <http://womenshealth.about.com/od/gonorrhoea1/f/gonorrhoeadiagno.htm>. Jordan, W. C. (1980). The Efficacy of Penicillin Regimen in Treatment of Women with Culture Positive Gonorrhoea. *Journal of the National Medical Association*. 72(9): 857-859. MedicineNet. (2011). Gonorrhoea In Women. Retrieved from http://www.medicinenet.com/gonorrhoea_in_women/page3.htm.