

Urethritis

Urethritis is the term used to describe inflammation in the urethra.

QUICK FACTS

- The most common causes of urethritis are chlamydia, gonorrhoea and mycoplasma genitalium
- Urethritis often has no symptoms at all
- It is diagnosed by a urine test or a swab
- Urethritis is usually treated with a single course of antibiotics

What is this?

Urethritis is the term used to describe inflammation in the urethra.

Urethritis is commonly caused by bacterial infection. It can usually be cured with antibiotics.

How do you get it?

Urethritis can be passed on through sex without a condom. The most common causes of urethritis are:

- [chlamydia](#)
- [gonorrhoea](#)
- [mycoplasma genitalium](#)

Non-specific urethritis (NSU) is diagnosed when a person has symptoms but all the tests for chlamydia, gonorrhoea and mycoplasma genitalium are negative. Other bacteria, yeasts and viruses may cause NSU.

What are the symptoms?

Urethritis often has no symptoms at all. If symptoms do occur, they include:

- pain or burning sensation when passing urine
- unusual discharge from the urethra

How do you test for it?

Urethritis is diagnosed by a urine test or a swab from the urethra.

How is it treated?

Urethritis is usually treated with a single course of antibiotic tablets; sometimes with an injection. Sometimes a longer course of medication is required.

Symptoms should improve within a few days of starting treatment-but can take up to a week to go away.-If your symptoms do not go away after one week of starting treatment, you should see your doctor again.

You should not have sex for 7 days after treatment.

Are there any complications if not treated?

Complications of urethritis such as a stricture (narrowing) of the urethra are very rare.

The main reason to treat an infection is to improve symptoms and to reduce the risk of passing infection on to sexual partners.

Is it likely to come back after treatment?

Urethritis treatment is very effective, so most recurrences of urethritis are-caused by another infection. After the course of treatment, if symptoms don't improve, you should see your doctor.

How can I protect myself?

Using a condom or dam during sex is the best way to protect yourself from urethritis.

Where can I get help?

- Visit a [sexual health service near you](#)
- Visit your local doctor
- Visit your local community health centre

DISCLAIMER

This fact sheet provides general sexual health information and is not intended to replace the need for a consultation with your doctor.

If you have concerns about your health, you should seek advice from your doctor.

If you require urgent care, you should go to your nearest Emergency Department or call [000](#).