



Non-gonococcal urethritis

What is Non-gonococcal urethritis?

Non-gonococcal urethritis (NGU) is an infection of the urethra (the tube that carries urine) caused by harmful pathogens (germs) other than gonorrhea. Several different types of pathogens other than gonorrhea may cause NGU, including:

- Chlamydia trachomatis
- Ureaplasma urealyticum
- Trichomonas vaginalis
- Herpes simplex virus
- Adenovirus
- Gardnerella vaginalis
- Mycoplasma genitalium

How do you get NGU?

NGU is spread or develops from:

- Anal, vaginal or oral sex with an infected person. This is usually the way NGU is transmitted.
- Mother to baby during the birth process. This can cause the infant to develop an infection in his eyes, ears or lungs.
- Urinary tract infections.
- A bacterial infection in the prostate gland.
- Urinary catheterization (the insertion of a tube into the urethra).

Can you protect yourself from NGU?

Yes. The best ways to avoid NGU are to:

- Not have sex.
- Limit your number of sex partners.
- Use a condom correctly each time you have sex.
- Talk to your sex partners about NGU and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Have regular check-ups if you are sexually active.

What are the symptoms of NGU?

Most people have no symptoms. When symptoms are present, they will usually appear one to five weeks after sex with an infected person. Symptoms may include:

Females

Pain when urinating (peeing)
Unusual discharge from vagina
Fever/dull stomachache or backache
Bleeding between periods
Rectal itching

Males

Pain when urinating
Drip from penis
Pain or swelling around the groin
Rectal itching

You should call a health care provider or the Guilford County Department of Public Health right away if you have any of these symptoms or if you have had sex with someone who has these symptoms. Since the symptoms of STIs often resemble one another, diagnosis by a health care provider is the only way to know for sure if you are infected. If you are pregnant, tell your health care provider.

Is NGU dangerous?

If untreated, NGU can cause serious reproductive and other health problems.

If you are a woman:

- Untreated infection can spread into the uterus or fallopian tubes and cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID).
- PID can cause permanent damage to the fallopian tubes, uterus and surrounding tissues. The damage can lead to chronic pelvic pain, infertility and a potentially fatal ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outside the uterus).
- Women infected with chlamydia are up to five times more likely to become infected with HIV, if exposed.

If you are a man:

- Infection sometimes spreads to the epididymis (the tube that carries sperm from the testis), causing pain, fever and rarely, sterility.

Is there a cure for NGU?

Yes, antibiotics are used to treat and cure NGU.

Can you still have sex with NGU?

You should not have sex until:

- You have finished all of your medicine.
- Your sex partners have been treated and have finished all of their medicine.

Who can I call for more information?

American Social Health Association Hotline: 1-800-227-8922

Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health

Greensboro or High Point: 336-641-7777

www.guilfordcountync.gov

Free language assistance is available upon request.