



Expedited Partner Therapy is allowable under NYS Public Health Law, Section 2312.

For more information on chlamydia or other STDs, visit [health.ny.gov/std](http://health.ny.gov/std)

# Expedited Partner Therapy

## A Guide for Partner Care

**Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) is a program in New York State that lets a health care provider prescribe certain antibiotics (medicine) to the sexual partners of a person with chlamydia.**

### Why am I receiving this?

Someone who you had sex with has been diagnosed with chlamydia. This person cares about your health, and has told a health care provider that you have been exposed to chlamydia.

### What is EPT?

EPT lets health care providers prescribe medicine to people who have been exposed to chlamydia. You may have either:

- A prescription that can be filled at any pharmacy; or
- The full dose of medicine. This may come in up to four pills.

If you have a prescription and do not have health insurance, or cannot afford the medicine, call your local health department to see if you can get free or low-cost treatment. You may also qualify for one of New York State's health insurance programs.

### How do I use EPT?

**EPT is easy to use. Simply follow these steps:**

- 1** **Read this information** to find out about EPT, chlamydia and the medicine used to treat it. Pay close attention to the information about the medicine. Make sure that you can take it safely.
- 2** In New York, EPT can only be used to treat chlamydia. It does not treat other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), like gonorrhea or syphilis. You should **contact your health care provider or a local health department to get tested for STDs and HIV**, even if you use EPT.
- 3** If you have a prescription, **go to a local pharmacy and fill the prescription.**
- 4** Once you have the medicine, follow the information provided. **If you have questions, talk with a pharmacist or health care provider.**
- 5** **Follow up with your health care provider or STD clinic** in three months to make sure that you have not been reinfected. Get tested for other STDs, including HIV.

## What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is one of the most common STDs. Each year, over 3 million people in the U.S. get this disease.

Anyone who has sex can get chlamydia. Some people are more likely to get it. These include people who:

- Are between 15 and 24 years old;
- Have new sex partners or multiple sex partners; or
- Do not correctly use a latex or polyurethane condom every time they have sex.

Chlamydia is caused by bacteria that enter the body during sexual activity. It can infect the genitals (penis or vagina), the mouth, throat or anus. Chlamydia is spread through unprotected sex with someone who is already infected.

Chlamydia can also be passed from a mother to her baby through childbirth. If you are pregnant, or think you may be pregnant, talk to your health care provider as soon as possible.

## How do I know if I have Chlamydia?

Many people do not have any symptoms of chlamydia. Up to half (50%) of infected men, and three out of four (75%) infected women have no symptoms. These people can still pass the disease to other sex partners.

If you do have symptoms, they usually start within 60 days after you had sex with an infected person. Many times, symptoms appear within a few weeks. People with symptoms may have one or more of the following:



### Women's Symptoms

Yellow or white discharge from your vagina

Small amounts of blood between periods

Unusual fluid from your urinary opening

Burning or painful feeling when urinating



### Men's Symptoms

Yellow or white discharge from your penis

Burning or painful feeling when urinating

## Can Chlamydia be cured?

The medicine that you have been given will cure chlamydia in most cases. It will not treat other STDs. Some people may have to take different medicine. For more information, read the "Important Information about Azithromycin" box below.

If chlamydia is not treated early, it can become more serious. The disease can also spread to other parts of the body.

## How can I protect myself?

Even if you had chlamydia before, you can still get it again. Your body does not become immune to the infection.

There are a few things that you can do to protect yourself from getting chlamydia or other STDs.

### Get tested for other STDs.

Even though the medicine that you have cures chlamydia, it does not cure all other STDs. Call your local health department or your health care provider to find out how to get tested for other STDs, including HIV.

### Take the medicine.

The medicine that you have been prescribed or given is one dose (up to four pills) of azithromycin. It is important to take all of the pills at the same time. If chlamydia is not treated, it can lead to serious health risks, including sterility in men, and infertility or ectopic pregnancy in women.

### Wait to have sex.

After you and your partner(s) each take the medicine, wait at least 7 days before you have any sex. This gives the medicine time to work. If you have sex too soon, you may re-infect yourself or your partner(s).

### Use a condom or dental dam.

When used correctly, latex or polyurethane condoms and dental dams can greatly reduce the risk of getting STDs, including chlamydia.

If you are infected with HIV, or may have been exposed to HIV, you should contact your health care provider for a complete exam, including testing for STDs and HIV.

## Important Information about Azithromycin

The recommended treatment for Chlamydia is azithromycin (a-zith-row-MICE-in). This medicine is also known as "zithro-max", "zithro" or "z-pack".

**Do not take azithromycin if you are allergic to this medicine, or similar drugs like erythromycin, clarithromycin or other macrolide antibiotics. Call your doctor for a medicine that is safe for you.**

Azithromycin is an antibiotic. Like other medicine, some people have side effects. Side effects may include: diarrhea, upset stomach, stomach pain, constipation, headache, feeling tired or dizzy, or getting a rash. Women may also have vaginal itching or discharge. If you have any of these side effects, talk to your health care provider.

If you vomit (throw up) within 24 hours of taking the medicine, call your doctor. The medicine might not have gotten into your body to treat the infection.

Azithromycin can be taken with or without food.

Do not take azithromycin within two hours of taking an antacid that contains aluminum or magnesium. This includes Rolaids, Maalox, Mylanta, Pepsid Complete, Milk of Magnesia and others. These antacids can make azithromycin less effective.

### Get emergency medical help (call 911) if you have any signs of an allergic reaction:

- Hives (small red bumps on your body)
- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling on your face, lips, tongue or throat.

Call your health care provider or pharmacist if you have any questions about azithromycin.