

What is PID?

Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) is an infection of a woman's reproductive organs. It is a complication often caused by some STDs, like chlamydia and gonorrhea. Other infections that are not sexually transmitted can also cause PID, such as douching.

How is PID spread?

Women develop PID when certain bacteria, such as chlamydia or gonorrhea, move upward from a woman's vagina or cervix into her reproductive organs

What are the signs and symptoms of PID?

Women may not realize they have PID because their symptoms may be mild, or they may not experience any symptoms. However, if they do have symptoms, they may notice:

- Pain in their lower abdomen
- Fever
- An unusual discharge with a bad odor coming from a person's vagina
- Pain and/or bleeding during or after sex
- Burning sensation when urinating
- Bleeding between periods.

How long after infection do symptoms appear?

PID symptoms can appear shortly after being diagnosed with an STD such as chlamydia or gonorrhea. It may take upwards of a year for most people to develop PID, but others can

develop it earlier, depending on the severity of the infection.

Who is most at risk?

Women with an STD such as chlamydia or gonorrhea who are sexually active and under the age of 25 are at the highest risk for developing PID. Women are more likely to get PID if they:

- Have an STD and do not get treated
- Have more than one sex partner
- Have a sex partners who has other sex partners
- Have had PID before
- Are sexually active and are age 25 or younger
- Use a douche
- Use an intrauterine device (IUD) for birth control.

What type of health problems are caused by PID?

PID is a very treatable condition and most women make a full recovery. Women who have the infection for a long period of time, or do not get treated can suffer from these long term affects:

- Infertility: Unable to conceive a child
- Ectopic pregnancy: Pregnancy that occurs outside of the uterus, such as the fallopian tubes
- Chronic pelvic pain: Pain in the lower abdomen caused by scarring of the fallopian tubes and other pelvic organs.

How is PID diagnosed?

There are no laboratory tests specifically for diagnosing PID. Typically, PID is diagnosed through a pelvic exam in conjunction with self-reported symptoms of patients, and STD testing.

How is PID treated?

PID is treated with antibiotics, but any damage, including scar tissue, cannot be reversed. The longer a woman delays treatment for PID, the more likely she is to become infertile, or may have a future ectopic pregnancy due to damage of the fallopian tubes.

How can PID be prevented?

Consistent and correct use of latex or polyurethane condoms can reduce the risk of transmission of STD's, and in turn may reduce the risk of PID. Early detection and treatment of STD's can reduce the risk of developing PID. PID can also be prevented by not using douches, and not having IUDs for birth control.

Where can I get more information?

- Your personal healthcare provider
- [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#)
- Utah Department of Health, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, 801-538-6191

