

Your Guide to

Urethritis

Simple facts on identifying symptoms, treatment, and prevention.



What is it?

Urethritis is inflammation of the urethra (the tube that carries urine and semen). It mainly affects people with a penis.

Urethritis is often caused by a sexually transmitted infection (STI). The most common causes are chlamydia and gonorrhoea, but other infections such as Mycoplasma genitalium, herpes simplex virus, and trichomoniasis can also cause it. Sometimes no specific cause is found.

How do you get it?

Urethritis is most often passed on through vaginal, anal, or oral sex without a condom. Sometimes irritation or injury to the urethra during sex or sex play can also cause similar symptoms. In some cases, no clear cause is identified.

Symptoms

Symptoms may include:

- Discharge from the penis
- Pain, stinging, or burning when peeing
- Irritation or discomfort at the tip of the penis
- An uncomfortable feeling along the urethra.

How do you get tested?

Testing for urethritis is usually done in people with a penis who have symptoms.

Tests may include:

- A first-pass urine sample
- Sometimes a swab from the urethra, if needed.

For the most accurate results, testing is usually done at least **1 hour after you last urinated**.

If symptoms continue after treatment, further testing may sometimes be needed.

Treatment

Urethritis is treated with antibiotics.

Your doctor or nurse will choose the most appropriate treatment based on:

- Your test results
- Your symptoms
- Whether gonorrhoea is suspected.

It is important to take all treatment exactly as prescribed.

Avoid sex, or use condoms, for **7 days from the start of treatment** and until your sexual partner or partners have been tested and treated.

Prevention

Using condoms correctly every time you have vaginal, anal, or oral sex helps reduce the risk of urethritis and other STIs. Regular STI testing is also important, especially if you have new or multiple partners.

Telling your partners

If you are diagnosed with urethritis, it's important to tell anyone you have had sex with in the last 3 months.

Partners need a full sexual health check, and may also need treatment.

Partner notification helps prevent reinfection and reduce transmission. Your doctor, nurse, or sexual health clinic can help you with this if needed.

Where can I get help?

Attend your local sexual health clinic or primary care provider.

For more information on all things sexual health and STIs, visit the Just the Facts website: justthefacts.co.nz



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