



planned
parenthood
TORONTO

LGV

**YOUR
HEALTH.
YOUR
CHOICE.**

Talk to your partner(s) about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and your health before you have sex. You can pass on an STI without knowing you have one. During sex, you can use latex condoms to lower your chances of getting STIs.

What is LGV?

LGV (Lymphogranuloma Venereum) is a sexually transmitted infection that is caused by bacteria that is similar to the bacteria that causes chlamydia. LGV can cause serious health problems if left untreated. It is a reportable infection, meaning that if you test positive for LGV, you will be contacted by a clinic or health department and asked to provide the contact information for current and past sexual partners for notification and testing purposes. Your name is not disclosed when a current or past sexual partner is notified.

How do you get LGV ?

You can get LGV if you have oral sex, vaginal sex, or anal sex with a person who already has the infection. It is also possible to get LGV through unprotected fisting and the sharing of sex toys.

How can you tell if you have LGV?

There are 3 stages of LGV infection:

Stage One

- ★ You may notice a small, painless sore at the site of infection (vagina, anus, penis, mouth) within 3 days to one month.
- ★ You may experience burning when urinating.
- ★ You may not get a sore or notice it if you do. You can still pass the infection on to your sexual partners from this point.

Stage Two

- ★ Within 2 to 6 weeks you may get swollen lymph nodes, fever, chills, loss of appetite and general muscle and joint aches.
- ★ If infected in your anus, you may notice pain and inflammation. You may also experience constipation or develop painful abscesses or ulcers.
- ★ If infected in your penis, you may notice a discharge and inflammation or swelling in your groin.
- ★ If infected in your vagina, you may experience a discharge and swelling in the pelvic nodes that may cause pelvic and back pain.
- ★ If infected in your mouth, the lymph nodes around your neck and/or armpits may swell.

It is important to use condoms or a latex barrier with sexual partners to decrease the risk of getting a sexually transmitted infection.

Stage Three

- ★ If left untreated, LGV can cause serious health problems after the first year of infection. This can include haemorrhoid-like growth, massive swelling of reproductive organs and rectal ulcers that may require surgery.

How do you get tested for LGV?

Diagnosis of LGV is not always straightforward; the signs and symptoms of LGV overlap with other STIs, including gonorrhoea and syphilis. Diagnosis is often based on your sexual and general health history, as well as a swab of the area in which an ulceration/sore associated with LGV may be present, and a blood test. The swab and blood test are then sent to the lab for confirmation of LGV.

How is LGV treated?

LGV is treated with antibiotics. The antibiotics may cause side effects such as nausea, vomiting, headache and diarrhea. You should tell your sexual partner(s) within the last two to three months that you have LGV. They should also get treated, even if they don't have any symptoms.

How is LGV prevented?

There is no vaccine for LGV and you can get it again even after you've had it. Condoms and other barrier methods reduce the risk of getting LGV. Latex gloves should be used for fisting and sex toys should always be sterilized after one use and not shared with sexual partners without a barrier.

Do you need a follow-up test?

No, but it is recommended that you abstain from unprotected sexual activity until the treatment is complete and the symptoms have gone away.

If you need further information or would like to book an appointment, call:

Planned Parenthood Toronto Health Services for youth ages 13 to 29. 416-927-7171. Health Services offers same-day, scheduled and drop-in appointments. For more information visit www.ppt.on.ca.

Women's Programming at the Bay Centre for Birth Control for women of all ages at 416-351-3700.

Youth can also access information about sexual health by calling the Teen Sex InfoLine at 416-961-3200 or chat live using MSN messenger at spiderbytes@hotmail.com from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday to Wednesday and 12 noon to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. You can also email us a question anytime at askus@spiderbytes.ca or visit www.spiderbytes.ca.