

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING TESTING FOR CHLAMYDIA AND GONORRHEA

Dear Patient:

Chlamydia and **gonorrhea** are bacterial infections that are spread through sexual contact. These infections are common, particularly among young sexually active people. Did you know that nearly **3.6 million** new chlamydia and gonorrhea infections occur each year, half of which affect young people (ages 15-24)?¹ Although symptoms in women may include pelvic pain or vaginal discharge, it is common to have an infection and not know it. In fact, very often there are no signs or symptoms in women or their partners. It is important to detect chlamydia and gonorrhea because untreated infections may persist, spread to other people, or cause problems with pregnancy.^{2,3} Chlamydia and gonorrhea can be detected with a urine test or vaginal swab, and the infections can be cured with prescription antibiotics.

Based on how common these infections are and because of recent insurance requirements, it is part of our universal screening strategy to automatically perform chlamydia and gonorrhea testing for all patients age 16-24, regardless of reported sexual activity. In addition, we may test patients who request to be tested, have vaginal discharge or other symptoms concerning for these infections, and pregnant women in their first trimester.

In many cases, screening for chlamydia and gonorrhea is a covered benefit under the Affordable Care Act. This means no co-pay, no deductible, no out-of-pocket cost to you.* Please note that all billing for laboratory services (bloodwork, cultures) is done by Labcorp. All questions regarding this billing should be directed to the appropriate laboratory billing department.

If you test positive — You are not alone. Every year millions of people find out that they have an infection. The good news is that we have identified the infection and can take steps to treat it, potentially avoiding complications. Having chlamydia or gonorrhea does not necessarily mean that you or your partner are engaging in sex outside of your relationship. It is possible to have an infection without any signs or symptoms. Regular testing, along with advances in the technology used for testing, has made it possible to get more accurate results. If you test positive, it is important to discuss your test results with your partner as they may need to seek treatment as well. It is also just as important to be re-tested in three months because re-infection is common, even after treatment.

If you test negative — Good news! We will see you back next year. Remember, it is important to schedule a well-woman exam once a year. The well-woman exam is more than a Pap test; it's an opportunity for your healthcare provider to examine your overall health. Your healthcare provider will determine which tests are right for you.

Thank you.

Nash OB-Gyn Associates, P.A.

* Coverage may not be available to all patients, please consult your health plan for coverage.

References: 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Incidence, Prevalence, and Cost of Sexually Transmitted Infections in the United States. <http://www.cdc.gov/std/stats/sti-estimates-fact-sheet-feb-2013.pdf>. Published February 13, 2013. Accessed February 2, 2017. 2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Chlamydia - CDC Fact Sheet. <http://www.cdc.gov/std/chlamydia/stdfact-chlamydia.htm>. Updated December 16, 2014. Accessed February 2, 2017. 3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Gonorrhea - CDC Fact Sheet. <http://www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea/stdfact-gonorrhea.htm>. Updated December 16, 2014. Accessed February 2, 2017. 4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sexually Transmitted Diseases Treatment Guidelines, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/std/tg2015/tg-2015-print.pdf>. Published June 5, 2015. Accessed February 2, 2017.