

Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)

Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) is an infection of the uterus (womb), Fallopian tubes and/or ovaries in women. It is the number one cause of female infertility.

Cause

PID is usually caused by a sexually transmissible infection (STI) such as gonorrhoea or chlamydia, but can be due to other infections. If left untreated, the infection advances to the uterus and fallopian tubes, progressing to PID.

PID occasionally develops after having an intrauterine device (IUD) inserted, termination of pregnancy or other surgical procedures.

Symptoms

Some women with PID have no symptoms, but symptoms can include:

- Unusual vaginal discharge or bleeding
- Pain when urinating or during vaginal sex
- Lower abdominal pain/heavier and more painful periods
- Fever

How is it transmitted?

PID is transmitted through unprotected vaginal sex or from surgical procedures.

How do I know if I have it?

Testing for PID involves a doctor taking swabs from the cervix and/or urethra, and doing an examination for tenderness or swelling of the uterus or tubes. Sometimes it is necessary for the doctor to do an ultrasound or laparoscopy (an operation where a small telescope is inserted through the wall of the abdomen and the doctor can see the tubes and ovaries and surrounding tissue).

Treatment/Management

If discovered early, PID is treated with antibiotics. As PID is usually caused by an STI, sex should be avoided until treatment is complete, and all sexual partners should be tested and treated to prevent re-infection.

Why is treatment important?

Untreated or recurrent episodes of PID are more likely to damage the fallopian tubes, causing scarring. This can lead to infertility. Women who have had PID have an increased risk of an ectopic pregnancy (a dangerous condition where the pregnancy implants in the tube rather than in the uterus). If left untreated, PID can also cause chronic pelvic pain.

Prevention

Using condoms and dams reduces the risk of contracting STIs such as chlamydia and gonorrhoea which cause PID. For more information about STIs visit

www.fpwa.org.au/healthinformation/information sheets/stitests/

**For more information about PID contact the Sexual Health Helpline on
9227 6178 or 1800 198 205 (country callers) or email sexhelp@fpwa.org.au**

**Practising safe sex reduces the risk of contracting HIV and other
sexually transmissible infections (STIs).**



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www.fpwa.org.au

info@fpwa.org.au

Sexual Health Helpline (08) 92276178 or 1800 198 205 (Country Callers)

sexhelp@fpwa.org.au

Quarry Health Centre for under 25s

7 Quarry Street, PO Box 378, Fremantle, WA, 6959

ph: (08) 9430 4544 fax: (08) 9430 4544

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