

## Protecting Yourself from PID

Not having sex is your best protection against PID and STD. Having sex with only one uninfected partner who only has sex with you will also protect you.

### HERE ARE SOME OTHER WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF:

- ✿ **Use latex condoms** (rubbers) with a water-based lubricant every time you have sex. Condoms will help protect you from STD, including PID. Both men and women should carry condoms.
- ✿ **Use plastic (polyurethane) condoms** if you're allergic to latex. These come in both male and female styles.
- ✿ **Do not douche.** A healthy vagina will keep clean by itself.
- ✿ **Get checked for PID and STD** regularly. Ask your health care provider to help you decide how often and which tests you should have.
- ✿ **If you have more than one sex partner,** get an STD check any time you're concerned about risk, even if you don't have symptoms.
- ✿ **Don't have sex** with a person who you think may have an STD.
- ✿ **Don't use drugs or alcohol** when you might have sex. If you're high, you might forget to protect yourself.

## What to Do if You Have PID

PID can be cured with antibiotic pills. If your PID is very bad, you may need to be in the hospital for a few days.

- ✿ **If you are given pills to take,** take all the pills. PID may come back if you don't.
- ✿ **Ask your health care provider** when you can have sex after treatment.
- ✿ **Ask your health care provider if your sex partner needs to be checked** and treated.

### To Learn More

**Call the CDC National  
STD and AIDS Hotline  
1-800-227-8922.**

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# PID

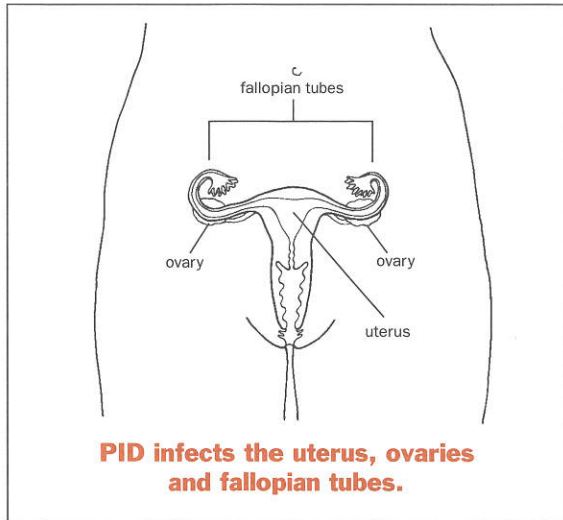
## Pelvic Inflammatory Disease





## What Is PID?

PID, or **p**elvic **i**nflammatory **d**isease, is caused by an infection of a woman's pelvic and sexual organs—the uterus, fallopian tubes and ovaries.



STD germs can spread from her vagina and cervix up into her uterus and other organs and cause PID.

Chlamydia and gonorrhea are the 2 main STDs that can cause PID. Women get STD—and PID—from sexual intercourse.

Not all PID is caused by STD. Rarely, IUDs, douching or some forms of vaginitis can cause PID.

## Symptoms of PID

Many women with PID have no symptoms. Women who do have symptoms may notice:

- ❖ Yellow or gray vaginal discharge.
- ❖ Bleeding between periods or after sex.
- ❖ Heavier and more painful periods.
- ❖ Cramps or pain in lower abdomen (belly), sometimes with fever or nausea.
- ❖ Pain deep inside during or after sex.
- ❖ Pain during a pelvic examination.

## Why Is PID Dangerous?

Many women don't know they have PID, so they don't get treated. PID can spread and cause painful and permanent damage to the pelvic and sex organs.

One in 5 women who has had PID cannot have children. The more times a woman has PID, the more likely that she will not be able to have children.

If a woman who has had PID gets pregnant, the baby may begin to grow in her fallopian tube instead of her uterus. This is called a tubal pregnancy. She may need an operation. She may even die.

PID can also cause painful scarring which may require surgery or a hysterectomy.

## Who Gets PID?

Any woman who gets gonorrhea or chlamydia may develop PID if she is not treated and completely cured.

The risk of PID is higher if a woman has more than 1 sex partner, a new sex partner, or if her partner has an STD.

PID may be more common in women who use an IUD for birth control, especially in the first month.

If you get an IUD, go back for a checkup in 4 to 6 weeks. Your health care provider will make sure the IUD is in place and that you do not have PID.

PID is more common in women who douche.

PID is less common in women who use condoms, a diaphragm, spermicides or birth control pills.

## How to Find Out if You Have PID

The only way to know for sure if you have PID is to go to a doctor or clinic. It is very important to treat any STD right away.

A pelvic examination and lab tests are used to check for PID.