



Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)

What is Pelvic Inflammatory Disease?

Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) occurs when a woman's uterus and / or fallopian tubes become infected. Sexually transmissible infections such as gonorrhoea or chlamydia are common causes of PID. Other bacteria that normally live in the vagina can also cause it. This may occur if there was damage from an earlier infection with gonorrhoea or chlamydia. Or it might happen after a termination of pregnancy, or having an IUD (coil) fitted.

What are the symptoms?

A woman may have all of these symptoms or only some of them. They may be quite severe or very mild.

- Lower abdominal or pelvic pain.
- Deep pain during sexual intercourse
- Fever and feeling unwell
- An unusual vaginal discharge
- Irregular menstrual bleeding

Sometimes PID can be occurring with no symptoms at all or symptoms that are so mild the woman may not think much of them ("silent PID").

What other problems can it cause?

If the fallopian tubes are infected they can become scarred and deformed. This can lead to infertility or an ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy occurring in the fallopian tube). This can also occur with silent PID.

PID can also cause long term lower abdominal or pelvic pain.

What tests do you do?

Women who may have PID should have an internal examination. They will have a range of tests ordered, including swabs from the cervix and vagina, urine specimens and blood samples.

What is the treatment?

The treatment is a combination of antibiotics, which will need to be taken for 2 weeks. If someone with PID is very sick, she might need to go into hospital for treatment.

Will sexual partners need to be treated?

Yes. This is very important. Chlamydia and gonorrhoea are common causes of PID so it is essential that partners are tested and given treatment to prevent re-infection of the woman and health problems in the man.

Further fact sheets available at:
<http://www.nt.gov.au/health/cdc/cdc.shtml>

For more information contact Clinic 34 in your area.

Darwin	89992678
Katherine	89739049
Alice Springs	89517549
Nhulunbuy	89870358
Tennant Creek	89624250

December 2005

