**What is gonorrhea?**

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that can infect both men and women. It can cause infections in the genitals, rectum, and throat. It is a very common infection, especially among young people ages 15-24 years.

**Mode of Transmission**

You can get gonorrhea by having anal, vaginal, or oral sex with someone who has gonorrhea.

A pregnant woman with gonorrhea can give the infection to her baby during childbirth.

**Signs/Symptoms**

Some men with gonorrhea may have no symptoms at all. However, menwho do have symptoms, may have:

1. A burning sensation when urinating;
2. A white, yellow, or green discharge from the penis;
3. Painful or swollen testicles (although this is less common).

Most women with gonorrhea do not have any symptoms. Even when a woman has symptoms, they are often mild and can be mistaken for a bladder or vaginal infection. Women with gonorrhea are at risk of developing serious complications from the infection, even if they don’t have any symptoms.

Symptoms in women can include:

1. Painful or burning sensation when urinating:
2. Increased vaginal discharge:
3. Vaginal bleeding between periods.

Rectal infections may either cause no symptoms or cause symptoms in both men and women that may include:

1. Discharge;
2. Anal itching;
3. Soreness;
4. Bleeding;
5. Painful bowel movements.

**Cure?**

Yes, gonorrhea can be cured with the right treatment. It is important that you take all of the medication your doctor prescribes to cure your infection. Medication for gonorrhea should not be shared with anyone. Although medication will stop the infection, it will not undo any permanent damage caused by the disease.

It is becoming harder to treat some gonorrhea, as drug-resistant strains of gonorrhea are increasing. If your symptoms continue for more than a few days after receiving treatment, you should return to a health care provider to be checked again.

**Long Term Affects**

Untreated gonorrhea can cause serious and permanent health problems in both women and men. In women, untreated gonorrhea can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). Some of the complications of PID are

1. Formation of scar tissue that blocks fallopian tubes;
2. Ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy outside the womb);
3. Infertility (inability to get pregnant);
4. Long-term pelvic/abdominal pain.

In men, gonorrhea can cause a painful condition in the tubes attached to the testicles. In rare cases, this may cause a man to be sterile, or prevent him from being able to father a child.

Rarely, untreated gonorrhea can also spread to your blood or joints. This condition can be life-threatening. Untreated gonorrhea may also increase your chances of getting or giving HIV – the virus that causes AIDS.