



## **URGENT and PRIVATE**

### ***IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR HEALTH (Treatment Fact Sheet)***

#### **TREATMENT FACT SHEET FOR SEX PARTNERS OF PERSONS WITH CHLAMYDIA**

#### **PLEASE READ THIS VERY CAREFULLY.**

Your sex partner has recently been treated for chlamydia. Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that you can get from having sex (oral, vaginal or anal) with a person who already has it. You may have been exposed. Chlamydia is easily treated with the medicine azithromycin (also known as Zithromax). Your partner may have given you azithromycin (pills) or a prescription for azithromycin. This medicine or prescription was given to your partner by his/her doctor to treat you.

It is important for you to see your own doctor or clinic provider right away for an examination. If you cannot get to a doctor in the next several days, you should take the azithromycin. Even if you decide to take the medicine, it is very important to see a doctor as soon as you can to get examined and tested for other STDs. People can have more than one STD at the same time. Azithromycin will not cure other sexually transmitted infections. Having STDs can increase your risk of getting HIV, so make sure to also get an HIV test.

#### **SYMPTOMS**

Some people infected with chlamydia have symptoms but many DO NOT. If you do have symptoms they may include the following:

- Males can have pain when they urinate (pee), pain in the testicles (balls) or pain in the lower part of the belly.
- Females can have an abnormal vaginal discharge, pain when they urinate, pain when having sex or vaginal bleeding between periods.
- Males and females can have a discharge or pain in the rectum if they've had rectal sex and become infected.

Remember many people with chlamydia do not have symptoms and can spread it without ever feeling anything is wrong.

#### **BEFORE TAKING THIS MEDICINE**

The medicine is very safe; however, **DO NOT TAKE** if:

- You are female and have lower belly pain, pain during sex, vomiting or fever.
- You are male and have pain or swelling in the testicles or fever.
- You have ever had a bad reaction, rash, breathing problems, or allergic reaction after taking azithromycin or other antibiotics. People who are allergic to some antibiotics may be

allergic to other types. If you do have allergies to antibiotics, you should be examined by your doctor before taking this medicine.

- You have a serious long-term illness, such as kidney, heart or liver disease.
- If you are currently taking another prescription medication, including medicine for diabetes, consult your pharmacist before taking the medication to ask about drug interactions.

If any of these circumstances exist, or if you are not sure, do not take the azithromycin. Instead, you should talk to your doctor as soon as possible. Your doctor will find the best treatment for you.

## **WARNINGS**

- If you do not take medicine to cure chlamydia, you can get very sick. If you are a woman, you might not be able to have children.
- If you are pregnant, seek medical evaluation before taking the medicine.

## **HOW TO TAKE THE MEDICINE**

- One gram (two pills) of azithromycin is used to treat chlamydia.
- You can take these pills with or without food. However, taking these pills with food decreases the chance of having an upset stomach and will increase the amount of medicine your body absorbs.
- You need to take the two pills you were given to be cured.
- Do NOT take antacids (such as Tums, Rolaids, or Maalox) for one hour before or two hours after taking the azithromycin pills.
- Do NOT share or give this medication to anyone else.

## **SIDE EFFECTS**

Possible side effects include:

- Slightly upset stomach
- Diarrhea
- Dizziness
- Vaginal yeast infection

These are well-known side effects and are not serious. Very few people experience any of these problems.

## **ALLERGIC REACTIONS**

Allergic reactions are rare. If you have ever had a bad reaction, rash, breathing problems or other allergic reactions with azithromycin or other antibiotics, consult your doctor or pharmacy before taking.

Possible serious allergic reactions include:

- Difficulty breathing/tightness in the chest
- Closing of your throat
- Swelling of your lips or tongue
- Hives (bumps or welts on your skin that itch intensely)

If you experience any of these reactions, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room immediately!

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Now that you have your medicine, do not have sex for the next seven days after you have taken the medicine. It takes seven days for the medicine to cure chlamydia. If you have sex without a condom, or with a condom that breaks, during those first seven days, you can still pass on the infection to your sex partners. You can also get re-infected yourself.
- If you think you do have symptoms of a chlamydia infection and they do not go away within seven days after taking this medicine, please go to a doctor for more testing and treatment.
- If you have any other sex partners, tell them you are getting treated for chlamydia, so they can get examined and treated.
- People who get chlamydia once can get it again. It is a good idea to get tested for all STDs three months from now to be sure you did not get another STD.
- Not having sex is the best protection against chlamydia and other STDs. Having sex with only one uninfected partner who only has sex with you is also safe.
- The use of latex condoms during sexual intercourse when used consistently and correctly can reduce the risk of transmission of chlamydia.
- If you have any questions about the medicine, chlamydia or other STDs, please call:

Illinois Department of Public Health's STD Section (217-782-2747) during normal business hours or the Department's STD/HIV hotline (800-243-2437).

**All calls are confidential.**

For more information about chlamydia or other STDs, or to find testing sites in your area, please visit the Department's Web site at [www.idph.state.il.us](http://www.idph.state.il.us).