



**URGENT and PRIVATE**

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

**TREATMENT FACT SHEET FOR SEX PARTNERS OF PERSONS  
WITH GONORRHEA**

**PLEASE READ THIS VERY CAREFULLY.**

Your sex partner has recently been diagnosed with gonorrhea. This means you may have been exposed to gonorrhea.

You can get gonorrhea from having any kind of sex (oral, vaginal or anal) with a person who already has them. The good news is that it is easily treated.

You are being given two different types of medicine. One is called cefixime (sometimes known as "Suprax"). The other is called azithromycin (sometimes known as "Zithromax"). These medicines will cure gonorrhea. Your partner may have given you both medicines, or a prescription that you can take to a pharmacy. These instructions are for how to take cefixime and azithromycin.

The best way to take care of this infection is to see your own doctor or clinic provider right away. If you can't get to a doctor in the next several days, you should take both medicines.

Even if you decide to take the medicines, it is very important to see a doctor as soon as you can, to get tested for other STDs. You may have been exposed to other STDs that cefixime and azithromycin will not cure. Having STDs can increase your risk of getting HIV, so make sure to also get an HIV test.

**SYMPTOMS**

Some people infected with gonorrhea DO NOT have symptoms. 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, painful urination, pain when having sex or vaginal bleeding between periods.
- Males and females can have pain in the throat and a discharge or pain in the rectum if they've had oral or rectal sex and become infected in either of these sites.

Remember some people with gonorrhea 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 cefixime, 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 these medicines . Instead, you should talk to your doctor as soon as possible. Your doctor will find the best treatment for you.

### **WARNINGS**

- If you performed oral sex on someone who was infected with gonorrhea, the medicine may not work as well. You need to see a doctor to get stronger medicine.
- If you do not take medicine to cure gonorrhea, 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**

- Take the medicines with food. This will decrease the chances of having an upset stomach, and will increase the amount your body absorbs.
- You should have one pill of cefixime (400 mg), and two pills of azithromycin (500 mg each). Take all three pills with water at the same time. You need to take all three pills in order to be cured.
- Do NOT take antacids (such as Tums, Rolaids, or Maalox) for one hour before or two hours after taking the medicines.
- Do NOT share or give these medicines 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**

Very 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, 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 these medicines. It takes seven days for the medicine to cure gonorrhea. 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 gonorrhea 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 gonorrhea, so they can get examined and treated.
- People who get gonorrhea 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 gonorrhea 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 gonorrhea.
- If you have any questions about the medicine, gonorrhea 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 gonorrhea 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).