

What is Mycoplasma Genitalium?

Mycoplasma genitalium (also known as Mgen) is a curable sexually transmitted infection. The bacterium infects the urethra and cervix. It can also affect the womb and fallopian tubes (causing pelvic inflammatory disease) and rectum.

What are the symptoms of Mycoplasma Genitalium?

The majority of people with Mgen have no symptoms. Many get rid of Mgen infection without any antibiotics.

The most common symptoms in men are:

- Burning or pain when passing urine
- Discharge
- Discomfort or pain in the testicles
- Proctitis, an inflammation in the rectum causing anal pain and discharge

The most common symptoms in women are:

- Abnormal vaginal discharge – change in the colour or smell or amount
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding eg: between periods or during or after sex
- Discomfort or pain in the lower abdomen
- Pain during sex
- Burning or pain when passing urine

How can I catch Mycoplasma Genitalium?

It is passed from one person to another during vaginal, oral or anal sex without a condom with someone who has the infection.

Who should be tested and where can I go to be tested?

Testing all people attending sexual health clinics is not recommended as most people who have Mgen do not develop any problems and will naturally clear the infection without any treatment.

For a few people with symptoms, testing for Mgen may be required. The clinic doctor or nurse will decide if you need to be tested based on your symptoms.

We would recommend testing if you have been in contact with someone with Mgen.

How do you test for Mycoplasma Genitalium?

Vaginal samples: A swab is taken from inside the vagina. This can be taken by the doctor, nurse or by you if you prefer.

Penis sample: A urine sample;

Rectal samples: A swab from the anal passage

If I have Mycoplasma Genitalium, what happens next?

Mgen is usually treated with a course of two antibiotics: Doxycycline, which is taken orally twice daily for 7 days followed immediately by Azithromycin, which is taken for 3 days. Doxycycline should be swallowed whole with a glass of water whilst standing or sitting upright. It is important not to lie down for at least 30 minutes after taking the capsules so they can move as swiftly as possible into the stomach to avoid irritation of the throat or oesophagus. Azithromycin should be swallowed whole, preferably with a drink of water, with or without food. These treatments may not be suitable for you if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. Some people may receive an antibiotic called moxifloxacin. Treatment is always free.

You should also be tested for other STIs such as chlamydia, gonorrhoea, HIV and Syphilis as you can have more than one infection at the same time.

Should I be tested to make sure the infection has gone?

Mgen can be difficult to treat as some types are resistant to some antibiotics so you should return to check the infection has gone, 5 weeks after you started taking your antibiotics.

How do I tell my partner that I have Mycoplasma Genitalium?

It is important that your current sexual partner is tested. We can help you tell your partner(s) if this is difficult.

When is it safe to have sex again?

You should avoid having any type of sex until you and your partner/s have both finished treatment, it is 14 days after the start of your treatment and your symptoms have gone.

What happens if Mgen is left untreated?

Untreated it can cause similar complications to Chlamydia trachomatis. Mgen may spread from the neck of the womb (cervix) to the womb (uterus). This is called pelvic inflammatory disease. Infection of the womb can cause longer term problems with fertility and pain. Mgen can spread from the urethra to the testicles causing pain and swelling of the testicles. This is uncommon, and known as epididymo-orchitis

How can I reduce the risk of infection?

You can catch Mgen again after it is treated. Protect yourself with new partners by ensuring a condom is used for vaginal, anal and oral sex. A sexual health screen is recommended if you change your partner or have more than one partner.