

Non-specific urethritis



Urethritis is infection of the urethra (the urinary canal leading from the bladder to the outside of the body).

It is considered non-specific when it is not caused by gonorrhoea, chlamydia or *Mycoplasma genitalium*.

How non-specific urethritis is spread

Most infections are caused by sexually transmitted infections.

Signs and symptoms

Non-specific urethritis causes symptoms including:

- > watery discharge from the penis
- > burning sensation or pain on urination.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis is made when tests for gonorrhoea and chlamydia are negative.

A urine sample and/or swab will be taken from the urethra and sent for tests in the laboratory. Some of the infections do not have tests that are readily available, and it is likely there are some causes that have not yet been identified. Some of the likely causes are bacteria such as *Ureaplasma parvum* and *Mycoplasma genitalium*, parasites such as *Trichomonas vaginalis* and viruses such as herpes simplex virus.

Incubation period

(time between becoming infected and developing symptoms)

Variable depends on the cause of the infection.

Infectious period

(time during which an infected person can infect others)

Until adequate treatment has been completed, for most infections.

Treatment

Treatment varies depending on the specific cause of the infection. Continued or recurring symptoms may require referral for specialist treatment.

Prevention

- > Seek medical attention if you develop symptoms
- > All sexual partners need to be contacted, tested and treated, if needed.
- > Avoid sexual contact until you and infected partners have completed treatment.
- > Testing to exclude other sexually transmitted infections is advisable.
- > Use condoms and other barrier methods to prevent getting sexually transmitted infections.
- > Get tested for sexually transmitted infections regularly (even if you do not have symptoms), particularly when you have new sexual partners.

Useful links

- > SA Health website:
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au
 - Avoiding sexually transmitted infections
 - Gonorrhoea
 - Chlamydia
 - Mycoplasma genitalium
 - Sexual health services

You've Got What? Non-specific urethritis

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The SA Health Disclaimer for this resource is located at
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/youvegotwhat

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