



**West Hertfordshire Primary Care Trust and
East and North Hertfordshire Primary Care Trust**

CHLAMYDIA SCREENING PROGRAMME

**Frequently Asked Questions
for
Parents**



Adapted from NHS Bedfordshire Community Health Services

1. Why screen for Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is the most common curable Sexually Transmitted Infection in the UK at present. It is particularly prevalent amongst young people between the ages of 15-24, where one in ten are known to be infected. Because so many who come into contact with Chlamydia experience no symptoms, screening is the only way we can be sure to identify the infection early and treat it before it causes irreversible damage.

If left untreated Chlamydia can cause pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy and infertility in women; it can also cause complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Males may experience painful infection in the testes, reduced fertility and arthritis.

The Department for Health have recognised the spread of Chlamydia as a national problem and have asked NHS Primary Care Trusts to implement a screening programme for young people.

2. Is School the right environment to carry out screening?

By screening at school we can get access to a large number of young people, making a reduction in the spread of the disease more likely. We can also catch the disease in the early stages, making it easier to treat effectively.

The screening programme includes a presentation by specialist staff which educates young people not only about chlamydia, but the importance of maintaining good sexual health throughout their life - building on the positive messages they have received through Personal, Social and Health Education lessons throughout their time in school.

3. How is the test carried out?

The test is based on a urine sample given to us by the students. Please note that to be accurate, those being tested need not to have passed urine for over an hour.

The student collects the first part of his/her urine in the plastic pot provided – we also provide antiseptic wipes and plastic gloves. The student then hands over the pot to our nurse, and fills in a form with their contact details. The pots are then collected together at the end of the session and sent to the Chlamydia Screening Laboratory.

4. Do you need parental agreement for students to be tested?

Legally we do not – not even if they are under 16 years of age. However if you do feel strongly that you do not wish your son/daughter to be tested, we will be happy to discuss your concerns further.

5. Why are we screening all students?

By testing everyone we avoid any potential embarrassment for students who may not wish to reveal whether or not they are sexually active. Our aim is to meet a target screening of 75% of all year 12 and 13 students.

6. How do students receive their results?

They are asked for two ways in which they can be contacted with their results – they can choose from the following letter, telephone call or text. Most young people choose text.

7. Will I receive notification of my son/daughters results?

No. Confidentiality applies to all sexual health services. This means that no information about the student will be disclosed without their prior consent. This includes parents, school, GP, partners or friends.

8. What follow up support is given to those with a positive test?

The student will be asked to contact the Chlamydia Screening Office, where they will be informed of their treatment options. They will be offered a choice of the following: through their GP, at the Department of Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM Clinic) or Family Planning Clinic.

9. What is the treatment for Chlamydia?

Antibiotics – usually a one-off dose. Information regarding the administration, contra indications and the possible side effects will be explained to the student by a health care professional.

10. Will partners need to be treated?

Yes. Treating partners is extremely important to prevent re-infection and to stop the infection spreading further. With the permission of the individual who has tested positive, all sexual partners will be traced by the Chlamydia Screening Office and offered treatment confidentially.

11. Is the specimen used to test for anything other than Chlamydia?

No. The specimens go straight to the Chlamydia screening lab, and no other tests are carried out.

