

- Take all the medicines prescribed until the course is completed.
- Don't have sex until you have completed treatment.
- Make sure that your partner(s) has had a check-up and finishes treatment - otherwise you could catch the STI again.
- Remember to use condoms and practise safer sex.

Avoiding PID

- Talk to your partner about STIs and safer sex.
- Use a condom for vaginal, oral or anal sex to protect you from STIs.
- Use a new condom each time for vaginal sex. Wash your hands and use a new condom for vaginal sex after you have had anal sex.
- Always wipe from front to back after going to the toilet.
- Follow your doctor's advice carefully after:
 - having a baby, miscarriage or abortion
 - operations such as a D&C
 - having an interuterine contraceptive device (IUD) put in or taken out.

Information

If you need further information, or an appointment, contact:

- your nearest sexual health service (phone local hospital for number)
- your doctor
- the local family planning centre (look under F in the phone book).

This resource is available from www.health.govt.nz
or the Authorised Provider at your local DHB



Pelvic Inflammatory Disease

PID

Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) is an infection in a woman's uterus and fallopian tubes.

PID can be painful. If it is not found and treated quickly, it can cause serious problems months or years later. There may be permanent damage. Scars can form in the fallopian tubes - the tubes leading from the ovaries to the uterus - partly or completely blocking them. This may stop eggs from reaching the uterus after they have been released by the ovaries, making you infertile.

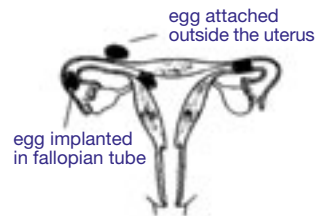
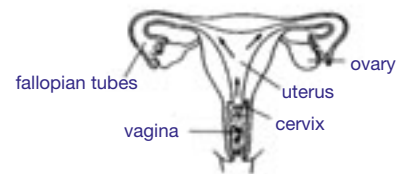
PID can be cured. You can also reduce your chances of getting it.

What happens when you get PID?

Infection from the vagina and cervix spreads into the uterus and fallopian tubes. The infection is caused by bacteria or other micro organisms. These may be passed on through sexual intercourse or may be present in the woman's genital tract.

After infection, scars may form in the fallopian tubes partly or completely blocking them. This may stop the eggs from reaching the uterus.

If this happens, you may not be able to become pregnant. The scars also make you more likely to have an ectopic (tubal) pregnancy. The fertilised egg becomes attached outside the uterus, usually in the tube, and a baby cannot develop. This can be life threatening for you. Surgery may be required which can include removal of the fallopian tube.



Are you at risk?

- Sexually transmissible infections (STIs) are the most common cause of PID. If there is any chance that you could get an STI, then you are at risk. So use condoms and practise safer sex.
- You are more likely to get PID if you have had it before.
- All women are at risk at certain times when the cervix is more open than usual, particularly after having a baby, miscarriage, or abortion. Also, after gynaecological operations such as dilatation and curettage (D&C) where the lining of the uterus is scraped.

Symptoms of PID

Often you may have no warning that anything is wrong. If there are symptoms, they might be:

- pain or tenderness low in the tummy or back
- pain during sex
- change in the normal discharge from the vagina (different odour, colour or thickness)
- unusually heavy, irregular or painful periods, or 'spotting' (bleeding between periods)
- temperature, chills, not wanting to eat, and feeling sick or vomiting at the same time as any of the above.

These signs are especially important if you notice them 2-14 days after having sexual intercourse with someone who could have an STI.

What to do

If you have symptoms or think that you may have PID, go to your doctor or sexual health service straight away. Don't wait - it is important to get treatment quickly.

The doctor will give you a vaginal examination and may take samples for testing.

If you do have PID, you need to tell your partner, or partners. Your PID is likely to have been caused by an STI. Your partner(s) may have the disease and therefore must have a check-up and treatment.

Treatment & self-help

PID can be treated with antibiotics. Sometimes PID may need hospital admission for treatment. You can help yourself during treatment in the following ways.

- Discuss your treatment with your health professional.