



# *Nongonococcal Urethritis/NGU*

PATIENT EDUCATION SERIES

## **What is NGU?**

NGU is an infection of the urethra, which is the tube connecting the bladder to the outside of the body. In men, the urethra also conveys ejaculate fluid. NGU is considered a sexually transmitted infection (STI) that can occur in men and women.

There are several organisms that can cause urethritis – most commonly Chlamydia, Ureaplasma, and Mycoplasma. If left untreated, organisms causing NGU can cause serious infections in the testicles and prostate of men and the uterus and fallopian tubes for women.

## **What are the symptoms of NGU?**

In men, symptoms of NGU include a watery, whitish discharge from the penis, itching or irritation around the opening of the penis, burning with urination, and frequent or urgent urination. Symptoms may also be absent, or mild and intermittent.

In women, NGU symptoms may consist of burning, urgent and frequent urination.

Note: In women these symptoms are more likely a urinary tract infection (UTI), which is not an STI; if you have these symptoms you should see a provider to sort out the cause of the urinary symptoms.

## **How long after exposure do symptoms appear?**

The incubation period (time between exposure and appearance of symptoms) for NGU varies from several days to a few weeks.

## **How is it diagnosed?**

NGU is usually diagnosed by urine tests for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia.

## **How is NGU treated?**

Treatment for NGU is usually very successful. Treatment usually requires that you take a course of antibiotics. Take all of the medication you are given, even if the symptoms start to go away before the medicine is gone. If you stop taking the medicine, you may leave some of the infection in your body.

When diagnosed with NGU, it is very important that any sexual partner(s) within the past 60 days be treated as well. If you are treated and a sexual partner is not, you may become reinfected if the partner still has the organism. During treatment, it is important to abstain from intercourse or any exchange of genital fluids. If treatment is a single dose, then you should abstain from sex for the seven days following. If given a seven day course of antibiotics, partners should abstain for that seven day time period.

Untreated partners can also develop more serious infections in the reproductive tract.

100% use of condoms and dental dams are advised for the best STI protection.