

# Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) for Chlamydia: A Guide for Partners Who Received Azithromycin



## Why am I getting this prescription or medicine?

One of your sex partners was diagnosed with chlamydia, an infection that spreads during oral, anal or vaginal sex. A health care provider gave your sex partner a prescription or medicine to give to you so that you can be treated for chlamydia. You also need treatment so you do not develop serious health problems, reinfect your sex partner(s) or pass the infection to others.



## What is chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) that spreads during oral, anal or vaginal sex. People who have chlamydia usually do not have symptoms. If people do have symptoms, they can include pain or burning during urination, and pus or discharge from the penis, vagina or anus. You can give chlamydia to others even if you do not have symptoms.



## What is this medicine?

The medicine is an antibiotic called azithromycin. It will cure your chlamydia infection but will not treat other STIs. It is safe and almost 100% effective when taken correctly.

**Do not** take azithromycin if **any** of the following are true:

- You have lower stomach pain, cramps, unusual vaginal discharge with a bad odor, pain or bleeding during sex, or bleeding between periods.
- You have, nausea, fever, pain in your testicles or a burning sensation when you urinate.
- You are allergic to or have ever had a bad reaction, rash or allergy to any antibiotics, including azithromycin (Zithromax), erythromycin or clarithromycin (Biaxin).
- You have any serious, long-term health problems such as kidney, heart or liver disease; have seizures; or are taking blood thinners.

If you have any of these conditions, visit a health care provider or clinic as soon as possible so that they can give you a different medicine that cures chlamydia.



## Why should I take this medicine?

If not treated, chlamydia can lead to serious health problems such as:

- Infertility — not being able to have children
- Ectopic pregnancy — a pregnancy outside the uterus, which can be life-threatening
- Infection in the testicles, which causes pain and fever
- Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) — a painful disease that involves the uterus, fallopian tubes and ovaries



## How should I take this medicine?

- Take the medicine by mouth. Do not share it with others. You need to take the full treatment for it to work.
- Take it with or without food. Taking it with food may help prevent an upset stomach.
- Take it at least two hours before or four hours after you take antacids that contain aluminum hydroxide or magnesium hydroxide (for example, Mylanta or Maalox).



## What should I do after taking this medicine?

- Do not have oral, anal or vaginal sex for at least seven days after you and your sex partner or partners have been treated. The medicine takes seven days to work.
- Visit a health care provider or clinic and get tested for other STIs, including HIV. It is important to get tested for other STIs since this dose of medicine will cure only chlamydia.



## What if I do not think I have chlamydia?

You can have chlamydia even if you feel healthy and do not have symptoms. You can get tested to find out if you have chlamydia. However, you should still take the medicine now.



## What if I am pregnant or think I may be pregnant?

Azithromycin is safe for pregnant people to take, and it can help keep the baby from getting infected during pregnancy and delivery. You should also visit a health care provider or clinic as soon as possible and

tell them that you were treated for chlamydia because your sex partner had it. You should also ask to be tested for other STIs because some can be passed on to your baby.



## Does this medicine cause side effects?

- It can. If you do have side effects, they may include diarrhea, nausea, stomachache, headache and throwing up. These are common and not dangerous.
- If you throw up within an hour of taking azithromycin, you will have to take another dose since the medicine may not have worked. To get more medicine, call the telephone number on the prescription, or visit a health care provider or clinic.
- Although rare, some people experience serious allergic reactions to azithromycin. These reactions can cause breathing trouble, chest tightness, closing of the throat, swelling of the lips or tongue, and hives (itchy bumps). If you experience any of these reactions after taking this medicine, immediately call **911** or go to the nearest emergency room.



## What if I cannot pay for the medicine?

Visit a New York City Sexual Health Clinic and tell them that your sex partner or partners has chlamydia. To find a clinic, call **311** or visit [nyc.gov/health/clinics](http://nyc.gov/health/clinics).



## How can I prevent STIs?

Using condoms correctly and consistently when having sex is the best way to prevent STIs.