

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) for Gonorrhea: A Guide for Partners Who Received Cefixime



Why am I getting this prescription or medicine?

One of your sex partners was diagnosed with gonorrhea, 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 gonorrhea. 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 gonorrhea?

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) that spreads during oral, anal or vaginal sex. People who have gonorrhea may 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 gonorrhea to others even if you do not have symptoms. If not treated, gonorrhea can lead to serious health problems.



What is this medicine?

The medicine is an antibiotic called cefixime. It will cure your gonorrhea infection but will not treat other STIs. It is safe and effective when taken correctly.

Before taking cefixime, talk to a health care provider if you have any serious, long-term

health problems such as kidney, heart, or liver disease or gastrointestinal diseases, especially colitis (a condition that causes swelling in the lining of the colon or large intestine); have seizures; or are taking blood thinners.

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

- You are allergic to or have ever had a bad reaction (such as breathing trouble, chest tightness, closing of the throat, swelling of the lips or tongue, or rash) or allergy to any antibiotics, including ceftriaxone (Rocephin) and penicillin antibiotics (such as ampicillin, amoxicillin or Augmentin, Pen-VK or penicillin V potassium, or penicillin G benzathine [Bicillin L-A]).
- If you have any of these conditions, see a health care provider as soon as possible so that they can give you a different medicine that cures gonorrhea.



Why should I take this medicine?

If not treated, gonorrhea 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 the pills as directed on the prescription or bottle.
- Take the medicine with food to avoid an upset stomach.



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.
- See a doctor 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 gonorrhea.



What if I do not think I have gonorrhea?

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



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

Cefixime is safe for pregnant people to take, and it can help keep the baby from getting infected during pregnancy and delivery. You should also see a health care provider as soon as possible and tell them that you

were treated for gonorrhea 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 nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, gas, heartburn and stomach pain. These are common and not dangerous. If you throw up within an hour after taking cefixime, 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 do experience serious allergic reactions to cefixime. 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 have gonorrhea. To find a clinic, call **311** or visit nyc.gov/health/clinics.



How can I prevent STIs?

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