

About *Mycoplasma genitalium*



For Everyone

JANUARY 31, 2025

KEY POINTS

- *Mycoplasma genitalium*, or *Mgen*, is a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) that can be treated.
- People who are sexually active can get *Mgen*.
- This fact sheet answers basic questions about *Mgen*.



Overview

What is *Mycoplasma genitalium*, or *Mgen*?

Mycoplasma genitalium (or *Mgen*) is an STI that can cause infection among people who are sexually active. *Mgen* can infect the cervix (opening to the uterus), inside the penis (the urethra), or the rectum.

Signs and symptoms

How do I know if I have *Mgen*?

People with *Mgen* often have no symptoms.

Someone with symptoms may notice:

- Vaginal discharge
- A burning sensation when peeing
- Discharge from the penis

See your healthcare provider if you notice any of these symptoms.

You should also see a provider if your partner has an STI or symptoms of one. Symptoms of an STI can include:

- An unusual sore
- A smelly discharge
- Burning when peeing
- Pain/bleeding after sex
- Bleeding between periods

Risk factors

Am I at risk for *Mgen*?



Sexually active people can get *Mgen* by having vaginal or anal sex without a condom with someone who has the infection. Researchers are still determining whether sex partners can spread *Mgen* through oral sex.

A person with *Mgen* can pass the infection to someone even when they have no signs or symptoms.

If you are sexually active, have an honest and open talk with your healthcare provider. Ask them if you should get tested for *Mgen* or other STIs.

How it spreads

How is *Mgen* spread?

You can get *Mgen* by having vaginal or anal sex without a condom with someone who has the infection. Researchers are still determining whether sex partners can spread *Mgen* through oral sex.

A person with *Mgen* can pass the infection to someone even when they have no signs or symptoms.

Prevention

How can I reduce my risk of getting *Mgen*?

The only way to completely avoid STIs such as *Mgen* is to not have vaginal or anal sex.

If you are sexually active, the following things can help lower your chances of getting *Mgen*:

- Being in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who does not have *Mgen*; and
- Using condoms [the right way](#) every time you have vaginal or anal sex.

Testing and diagnosis

Should I be tested for *Mgen*?

Although people with *Mgen* often have no symptoms, someone with symptoms may notice:

- Vaginal discharge
- A burning sensation when peeing
- Discharge from the penis

See your healthcare provider if you notice any of these symptoms.

You should also see a provider if your partner has an STI or symptoms of one. Symptoms of an STI can include an unusual sore, a smelly discharge, burning when peeing, pain/bleeding after sex, and bleeding between periods.

If you are sexually active, have an honest and open talk with your healthcare provider. Ask them if you should get tested for *Mgen* or other STIs.

How will my healthcare provider know if I have *Mgen*?

Laboratory tests can diagnose *Mgen*. Your healthcare provider may ask you to provide a urine sample for testing. In some cases, they may use (or ask you to use) a swab to get a sample from the vagina or cervix.

Treatment and recovery

Is there a cure for *Mgen*?

Yes, the right treatment with antibiotics can cure *Mgen*. It is important that you take all of the medicine your healthcare provider gives you to treat the infection. Do not share medicine for *Mgen* with anyone. Your sex partner(s) should also see a healthcare provider who can test and treat them if needed. When taken properly, treatment will stop the infection and can decrease your chances of having problems later. Although medicine will stop the infection, it will not undo any permanent damage caused by the disease.

It is becoming harder to treat some *Mgen* infections, as drug-resistant strains of *Mgen* are increasing. Return to a healthcare provider if your symptoms continue for more than a few days after completing treatment.

When can I have sex again after my *Mgen* treatment?

Wait until you and your sex partner(s) complete treatment and symptoms are gone before you have sex again.

If you were treated for *Mgen* in the past, you can still get it again. This can happen if you have vaginal or anal sex without a condom with a person who has *Mgen*.

What happens if I don't get treated for *Mgen*?

Left untreated, *Mgen* can cause serious and permanent health problems in women, including [pelvic inflammatory disease](#) (PID). Some of the complications of PID are:

- Formation of scar tissue that [blocks fallopian tubes](#) [↗](#)
- Ectopic pregnancy ([pregnancy outside the uterus](#) [↗](#))
- [Infertility](#) (not being able to get pregnant)
- Long-term pelvic/abdominal pain

During pregnancy, *Mgen* may be associated with preterm (early) delivery or pregnancy loss.

We do not know if men develop long-term health problems from *Mgen*.

SOURCES

CONTENT SOURCE:

National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and Tuberculosis Prevention; About Division of STD Prevention