



Factsheet: Lymphogranuloma Venereum (LGV)

What is LGV?

LGV is a bacterial infection. It is a more aggressive form of chlamydia.

How is it transmitted?

LGV can be found in semen, vaginal fluids and rectal secretions, and in the throat. It can be transmitted through:

- Unprotected vaginal, anal, and oral sex (note: ejaculation does not have to happen).
- Fisting.
- Mother to Child transmission (during childbirth).
- Intimate/close genital contact.

What are the symptoms?

A person can have LGV and not have any symptoms.

If a person does have symptoms they will usually develop within three days and three weeks after exposure. Symptoms can vary depending on which part of the body is infected and how long it remains untreated.

Symptoms can include:

- Fever, muscular pain and general ill-health.
- Painless blisters/sores.
- Swelling in the rectum/vagina/groin.
- Swelling of lymph glands.
- Discharge from penis/rectum/vagina.

The LGV Test

This test includes a urine test and/or by taking a swab from the infected area.

How is it treated?

LGV can be treated and cured with specific antibiotics.

If LGV is left untreated, the symptoms can become severe causing extreme swelling of the lymph glands and the infected areas of the genitals, e.g. inside the rectum or vagina. Complications of the untreated infection may require surgery.

Following treatment for LGV, a person can be re-infected if they are exposed to that STI again.



Prevention

- When sexually active, always use condoms and/or dental dams for vaginal, anal and oral sex, and for rimming.
- Get tested and treated, if required.
- Do not share sex toys, [or if toys are shared, use condoms on the sex toy, change the condom between people, remove it after use, and thoroughly clean the toy before using it again].
- When using fingers or hands for penetration (anally and/or vaginally), use latex gloves or finger cots, particularly if there are visible cuts or broken skin on the hands, and do not share fingers (i.e. do not use fingers on yourself that you have already used on your partner where infected fluids could be passed on).
- Make informed decisions: talk to sexual partner(s) about STI testing and using condoms, and get informed about the risks.
- Mutual monogamy (both partners test for STIs and don't have any, and both partners agree to only have sex with each other, and keep it that way!).

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