

Chlamydia screening in women

Because of advances in research and technology, early detection and treatment of chlamydia trachomatis (chlamydia) is cost effective and can help prevent adverse health and social consequences of untreated chlamydia infections such as pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility. A major obstacle to detecting chlamydia infection is that those at risk neither have symptoms nor are aware of the likelihood of infection. Thus, screening for chlamydia, the most common bacterial sexually transmitted disease in the U.S., is suggested for women 16–24 years of age who are sexually active.²

Measure

Women 16–24 years of age who have been identified as presumed sexually active and who have had at least one test for chlamydia during the measurement year³

Exclusions

Women who had a pregnancy test followed within seven days by either a prescription for Accutane (isotretinoin) or an x-ray

Women who should be tested include

Those who are sexually active and 25 years old or younger; those who are seeking a pregnancy test, birth control, STD testing, or gynecological visit; and those who give a vague sexual history or history of sexual assault or abuse

Patient medical record should include

The date and place of the patient's most recent screening

Tips for provider and/or staff when talking to the patient

- Focus on chlamydia screening as a tool to prevent serious infections and lifelong gynecological problems.
- Make discussion of this screening a standard part of any discussion of every visit.
- Remember that for insured patients, the screening is covered at little or no cost.
- Antibiotic treatment cures chlamydia.
- The diagnosis is easy and non-invasive.
- A pelvic exam is not necessary to make the diagnosis.
- Diagnosis can be made via urine sample screening.

¹ HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, "National Quality Measures Clearing House," accessed Sept 2, 2014, <http://www.qualitymeasures.ahrq.gov/content.aspx?id=47147&search=chlamydia+screening>

³ Peter Bach et al. HEDIS 2014 Technical Specifications for Health Plans (National Committee for Quality Assurance 2013), 88–90