



EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF  
DERMATOLOGY AND VENEREOLOGY

## Information Leaflet for Patients

# ATOPIC ERUPTION OF PREGNANCY (AEP)

### **The aim of this leaflet**

*This leaflet is designed to tell you more about Atopic Eruption of Pregnancy (AEP). It tells you what the condition is, what causes it, and what can be done about it.*



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## Information Leaflet for Patients

# PSORIASIS IN PREGNANCY AND DURING BREASTFEEDING

### The aim of this leaflet

*This leaflet is designed to help you understand more about psoriasis in pregnancy and its treatment during pregnancy and when breastfeeding. It also discusses the management of your psoriasis before, during, and after your pregnancy.*



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## Information Leaflet for Patients

### **USE OF BIOLOGICS FOR PSORIASIS DURING PRE-CONCEPTION, PREGNANCY, & BREASTFEEDING**

#### **The aim of this leaflet**

*This leaflet has been written to help you understand more about the use of biological drugs or “biologics” for the treatment of psoriasis when you want to become pregnant, or if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. It tells you what needs to be considered regarding this treatment before, during, and after your pregnancy and where you can find out more about it.*

# Genital warts - Patient information leaflet

## Key points

Genital warts are sexually transmitted  
Warts are skin growths caused by a virus called HPV  
HPV is passed from one person to another during sex  
People can carry HPV but not always have obvious warts  
You can reduce the risk of catching HPV by ALWAYS using condoms during sex

## What are genital warts?

- ❖ Genital warts are caused by a virus called Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) which is a sexually transmitted infection.
- ❖ Only certain types of HPV cause genital warts.
- ❖ There are other types of HPV that do not cause genital warts but can cause abnormal (pre-cancerous and if untreated may lead to cancer) changes in the cells at the neck of the uterus (the cervix), the anal canal, penis and vulva. It is possible to catch both types at the same time.

## How do you get genital warts?

- ❖ The types of HPV that cause genital warts are usually different from those causing warts on other body parts, such as the hands. People do not usually get genital warts by touching warts on their hands or feet.
- ❖ Genital warts are usually spread by direct skin-to-skin contact during vaginal, anal, or possibly oral sex with someone who has this infection. Often, although the virus is in the skin, warts may never appear.
- ❖ Warts may appear within several weeks after sex with someone who has the wart-type of HPV, or they may take several months or years to appear.
- ❖ HPV may be more likely to be transmitted when warts are present, but the virus can be transmitted even when there are no visible warts. This makes it hard to know exactly when or from whom you got the virus.
- ❖ New warts may appear several months after treatment, in the absence of new infection.
- ❖ If you receive the HPV vaccine before you become you start having sex, this can prevent you catching the virus and so reduce the chance of you developing genital warts.
- ❖ Even if you have had genital warts before, you can still catch the virus again and develop warts again

## What are the symptoms of genital warts?

- ❖ The most common symptom in men and women is lumps anywhere in the genital area
- ❖ Genital warts appear as raised growths or bumps which can be single or multiple, small or large. Sometimes they are flat. They are usually flesh-coloured or whitish in appearance.
- ❖ Warts only rarely cause itching, burning, bleeding or pain.

## Do I need any tests?

- ❖ If you think you have been in contact with genital warts, or other infections, or have symptoms that could be genital warts you should visit your family doctor or local sexual health or venereology/dermatology clinic for a check-up.
- ❖ Sometimes warts can be hard to see. Also, it can be hard to tell the difference between a wart and normal bumps and lumps in the genital area. A doctor or nurse will check more closely and may use a magnifying lens to find smaller warts.
- ❖ If you have genital warts, you should also be tested for other sexually transmitted infections such as HIV, syphilis, chlamydia and gonorrhoea as you may have more than one infection at the same time.

## Genital warts - Patient information leaflet

### What is the treatment for genital warts?

- ❖ A healthy immune system is usually able to clear the virus, or suppress it, over time leading to long term cure of the warts.
- ❖ There are a number of different treatments available for genital warts. No one treatment is best.
- ❖ The goal of any treatment is to remove visible genital warts and improve annoying symptoms. None of the treatments clear the virus from your body. All treatments can sometimes cause local skin reactions including itching, burning, erosions, and pain.
- ❖ About 1/3 of genital warts return, whichever treatment you have.

#### Clinic treatment

*(These need to be done by a doctor or nurse but have the advantage of getting rid of warts more quickly)*

- ❖ Cryotherapy (freezing with liquid nitrogen).
- ❖ Trichloroacetic acid is a chemical applied to the wart
- ❖ Electrosurgery / scissors excision / curettage / laser

#### Home treatment (none of these can be used if there is a chance that you are pregnant)

- ❖ Podophyllotoxin cream or solution. This is a self-applied treatment for external genital warts and must be used for about 6 weeks.
- ❖ Imiquimod cream. This is also a self-applied treatment for external genital warts. It may need to be used for up to 16 weeks.
- ❖ Sinecatechin cream. The ointment is applied three times daily. It may be used for up to 16 weeks.

### Should I have sex if I have genital warts?

- ❖ It is sensible to have a check for other infections before having sex, and while you have warts it is recommended that you use condoms as this may speed up the time taken for the virus to clear.
- ❖ If you have sex with a new partner, condom use will reduce the risk of transmission, but not completely.

### What are the possible complications of genital warts?

- ❖ Genital warts do not lead to any long-term physical problems
- ❖ Genital warts do not affect fertility
- ❖ Some people may be anxious by the appearance of warts which can affect their sex life

### Genital warts and pregnancy

- ❖ Because of hormone changes in the body, warts can grow in size and number during pregnancy. They nearly always get much smaller or disappear after the baby has been born
- ❖ Most children are born to women with a history of genital warts are healthy.
- ❖ Very rarely, babies exposed to the wart-types of HPV during birth may develop wart growths in their throat or genital area. This so unusual that women with genital warts do not need to have a Caesarean-section delivery unless warts are blocking the birth canal.

### Do I need to tell my partner?

- ❖ If you do have genital warts, it is recommended that your current sexual partner, and any other sexual partner you have had over the last six months, are checked for genital warts, and given general information about sexually transmitted infections and their prevention.

### Further help and information

- ❖ If you suspect that you have genital warts or any other sexually transmitted infection, then see your family doctor or local sexual health or venereology/dermatology clinic.

# Chlamydia - Patient information leaflet

## Key points

Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection  
It is easily passed from one person to another during sex, including oral sex  
It often causes no symptoms  
Treatment is simple  
If chlamydia is not treated it can cause serious long term health problems  
You can protect yourself by ALWAYS using condoms when you have sex

## What is chlamydia?

- ❖ Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection. It is caused by a bacterium called *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

## How do you get chlamydia?

- ❖ You can catch chlamydia when you have sex with someone who already has the infection. This can be by vaginal sex, oral sex or anal sex.
- ❖ The infection is more common in young people, people who frequently change sexual partners and people who do not use condoms during sex.
- ❖ Even if you have had chlamydia before, you can still catch it again

## What are the symptoms of chlamydia?

More than 70% of women and 50% of men who have chlamydia do not have any genital symptoms when they are infected. Infection in the rectum and throat usually causes no symptoms at all.

- ❖ The most common symptoms in women are
  - A change in the colour or smell or amount of discharge from the vagina
  - Bleeding between periods or heavier periods
  - Bleeding after sex
  - Burning feeling when passing urine
  - There may be pain or discomfort in the lower abdomen
- ❖ The most common symptoms in men are
  - Burning when passing urine
  - Discharge from the end of the penis
  - There may be pain or discomfort in the testicles

## Do I need any tests?

- ❖ Yes, a sample from the genital area is needed to make the diagnosis. In some places a urine test may be used.
- ❖ If you think you have been in contact with chlamydia, or other infections, or have symptoms that could be chlamydia you should visit your family doctor or local sexual health or venereology/dermatology clinic.

## Chlamydia - Patient information leaflet

- ❖ The doctor or a specialist nurse will take a swab (sample) from the penis, vagina or cervix (neck of the womb) and send it to a laboratory where it will be tested for *Chlamydia trachomatis*. If you have had oral or anal sex, the doctor may also take swabs from your throat and anus. In some situations you may be able to take the swab yourself.
- ❖ If you have chlamydia, you should also be tested for other sexually transmitted infections such as HIV, syphilis, hepatitis B and gonorrhoea, as you can have more than one infection at the same time.

### What is the treatment for chlamydia?

- ❖ It is important to receive treatment for chlamydia as quickly as possible, as the infection can cause complications and serious health problems if it is left untreated.
- ❖ Chlamydia is treated with antibiotic tablets, usually azithromycin or doxycycline.

### Should I have sex if I have chlamydia?

- ❖ You should avoid any sex, even with a condom, until after both you and your partner have finished all your treatment and your symptoms have gone.

### What are the possible complications of chlamydia?

- ❖ Chlamydia is unlikely to lead to any long-term problems if it is treated quickly. However, without treatment chlamydia can cause serious problems.
- ❖ Women can develop pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). This can cause abdominal and pelvic pain. It can also lead to infertility and ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy that occurs outside the womb). Men may develop a painful infection in their testicles.
- ❖ In rare cases, chlamydia may cause other symptoms such as arthritis (swollen joints) and inflammation of the eyes. This is more common in men.

### Chlamydia and pregnancy

- ❖ If you are pregnant, chlamydia can be passed from you to your baby during birth. This can lead to an infection of their eyes (conjunctivitis), and / or a chest infection.

### Do I need to tell my partner?

- ❖ If you do have chlamydia, it is essential that your current sexual partner, and any other sexual partner you have had over the last two months, is tested and treated.
- ❖ This is to stop you getting the infection again, and to prevent your partner(s) getting complications.

### Further help and information

- ❖ If you suspect that you have chlamydia or any other sexually transmitted infection, then see your family doctor or local sexual health or venereology/dermatology clinic.

# Syphilis - Patient information leaflet

## Key points

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection  
It is easily passed from one person to another during sex, including oral sex  
It often causes no symptoms  
Treatment is simple  
If syphilis is not treated it can cause serious long term health problems  
You can usually protect yourself by ALWAYS using condoms when you have sex

## What is syphilis?

- ❖ Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection. It is caused by a bacterium called *Treponema pallidum*.

## How do you get syphilis?

- ❖ You can catch syphilis when you have sex with someone who already has the infection. This can be by vaginal sex, oral sex or anal sex. Pregnant women can pass it to their baby.
- ❖ The infection is more common in men who have sex with other men, people who frequently change sexual partners and who do not use condoms during sex.
- ❖ Even if you have had syphilis before, you can still catch it again.

## What are the symptoms of syphilis?

The signs and symptoms are the same in both men and women. There are 4 stages of infection.

### 1 Primary syphilis

An ulcer (chancre) develops where the bacteria enters the body, usually about 2 – 3 weeks after having sex with an infected person, but it may appear anytime up to three months later. There is usually one ulcer which is painless and this is most commonly on the penis in men, on the vulva or vagina in women, or on the anus. Depending on where the ulcer is, you may not notice it. The ulcer may take up to 6 weeks to heal and is very infectious to sexual partners.

Occasionally there may be several ulcers, they may be painful, or in places such as the mouth and lips.

### 2. Secondary syphilis

Secondary syphilis develops 3-6 weeks after the appearance of the ulcer if you do not get treatment. This is caused by the bacteria spreading in your blood stream. You may notice a skin rash, often including the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, lumps in the genital area, white patches in the mouth, swollen glands, or less commonly, patchy hair loss, deafness, eye problems, inflammation of the liver, kidneys or brain. Secondary syphilis is very infectious to sexual partners.

Without treatment, the rash and other symptoms from secondary syphilis usually disappear after several weeks. However, the symptoms may 'come and go' for up to two years.

### 3. Latent (hidden) syphilis

After the symptoms of secondary syphilis have cleared, you may not have any symptoms for several years, but the infection can be found on a blood test.



# Syphilis - Patient information leaflet

## 4. Tertiary syphilis

About 1 in 10 people with untreated syphilis will develop serious damage of the nervous system, brain, bones, or heart. This may be many years later.

### Do I need any tests?

- ❖ Yes, if you have an ulcer which might be caused by syphilis, it is possible to take a swab from the ulcer to make the diagnosis. A blood test will need to be taken too and sent to a laboratory where it will be tested for antibodies against the bacteria that cause syphilis. For some people syphilis will not show up on the test straight away so it might need to be repeated.
- ❖ If you think you have been in contact with syphilis or have symptoms that could be syphilis you should visit your local sexual health or venereology/dermatology clinic.
- ❖ If you have syphilis, you should also be tested for other sexually transmitted infections, as you can have more than one infection at the same time. You should have a test for HIV infection.

### What is the treatment for syphilis?

- ❖ It is important to receive treatment for syphilis as quickly as possible, as the infection can cause complications and serious health problems if it is left untreated.
- ❖ Syphilis is treated with a course of antibiotics, usually penicillin injections.

### Should I have sex if I have syphilis?

- ❖ You should avoid sex until after both you and your partner(s) have finished all your treatment and your symptoms have gone.

### What are the possible complications of syphilis?

- ❖ Syphilis is unlikely to lead to any long-term problems if it is treated quickly. However, without treatment syphilis can spread to other parts of your body and cause serious problems.
- ❖ In 1 in 10 cases, where syphilis has been left untreated, it can spread through the bloodstream to cause infections in other parts of your body, such as your bones, heart and brain. This may not show up for several years.
- ❖ Once you have had treatment for syphilis, some of your blood tests will always be positive. This does not mean you need further treatment but you need to remember that you have been treated for syphilis (and keep a copy of your blood results) so you can tell doctors in the future if they ask you.

### Syphilis and pregnancy

If you are pregnant, syphilis can be passed from you to your baby during the pregnancy. This can lead to miscarriage, still birth or serious illness in the baby (congenital syphilis) if the mother is not treated during pregnancy. If you are found to have syphilis, treatment can be given safely during pregnancy.

### Do I need to tell my partner?

- ❖ If you have primary syphilis, it is important that your current sexual partner, and any other sexual partner you have had over the last three months, is tested and treated. If you have secondary syphilis it is important to contact partners over the last 2 years.
- ❖ This is to stop you getting the infection again, and also so your partners do not develop complications.

### Further help and information

- ❖ If you suspect that you have syphilis or any other sexually transmitted infection, then see your local sexual health or venereology/dermatology clinic.

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# Information Leaflet for Patients

## URTICARIA

### The aim of this leaflet

*This leaflet is designed to help you understand more about urticaria. It tells you what this condition is, what causes it, what can be done, and practical advice for living with urticaria.*



EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF  
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## Information Leaflet for Patients

# ACNE IN PREGNANCY

### **The aim of this leaflet**

*This leaflet has been written to help you understand more about acne in pregnancy. It will tell you what acne is, what causes it, and what can be done about it.*