

# PELVIC INFLAMMATORY DISEASE(PID)

## TO YOUR HEALTH - PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT

### DESCRIPTION

Infection of the female internal reproductive organs. This is often caused by an unresolved sexually transmitted organism. It can involve the fallopian tubes, cervix, uterus, ovaries, and urinary bladder.

### FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Early symptoms (up to 1 week)

- Pain in the lower pelvis on one or both sides, especially during menstrual periods. Menstrual flow may be heavy.
- Pain with intercourse.
- Bad-smelling vaginal discharge.
- General ill feeling.
- Frequent, painful urination.

Later symptoms (1 to 3 weeks later):

- Severe pain and tenderness in the lower abdomen.
- Fever.
- Increased bad-smelling vaginal discharge.

### CAUSES

Bacterial infection (chlamydia, gonorrhea, or mycoplasma) or a viral infection. This may be transmitted by an infected sexual partner or can be attracted during childbirth, abortion, and/or pelvic surgery.

### RISK INCREASES WITH

- Multiple sexual partners.
- Sexually active females
- Untreated sexually transmitted infection.
- Use of an intrauterine contraceptive device (IUD).
- Previous history of PID or cervicitis.

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Use condoms to help prevent sexually transmitted infections. Seek routine medical check-ups to rule out sexually transmitted infections if you have multiple sexual partners. Have your sexual partner evaluated and treated if necessary. After treatment don't resume sexual activity with your partner until his/her tests show no infection, or they have been treated.

### EXPECTED OUTCOME

Usually curable with early treatment and avoidance of further infection. The illness lasts from 1 to 6 weeks, depending on its severity. Poorer prognosis if treated late and unsafe lifestyle continues.

### POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Pelvic abscess and rupture. This can be life-threatening.
- Adhesions (bands of scar tissue) inside the pelvis.
- Infertility
- Ectopic pregnancy
- Recurrence

### GENERAL MEASURES

- Diagnostic tests include laboratory blood studies and culture of the vaginal discharge; pelvic ultrasound; and surgical diagnostic procedures.
- You may receive treatment as an outpatient if infection is mild.
- You must adhere to treatment and medication schedule. Close medical follow-up care is necessary.
- Use heat to relieve pain, such as warm baths. This may reduce the bad odor of the vaginal discharge, as well as relax muscles and relieve discomfort. Sit in a tub of warm water for 10 to 15 minutes as often as needed.
- Use sanitary pads to absorb discharge or menstrual flow. Do not use Tampons until condition clears.
- Avoid sexual intercourse, tampon use and douching during treatment.
- Hospitalization may be required for severe illness.

### MEDICATION

Intravenous or intramuscular antibiotics to fight infection. Early or mild PID may be treated with oral antibiotics and pain relievers.

### DIET

No special diet.

### NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF...

- Symptoms recur after treatment.
- New, unexplained symptoms develop.

Student Health Center



[WWW.SIU.EDU/~SHC](http://WWW.SIU.EDU/~SHC)

This information is for educational purposes only. Consult your doctor for specific medical advice, diagnosis and treatment.

618-453-3311

Dial-A-Nurse is available after-hours until 10:30 p.m. during fall and spring semesters. In case of emergency dial 911.