



## Lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV)

### What is LGV?

Lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV) is a bacterial sexually transmitted infection (STI). LGV bacteria are similar to those that cause Chlamydia.

LGV is a **reportable infection**. That means, if you test positive, a local health authority may contact you for the contact information of current and past sexual partners for notification and testing. **Your information is kept private.**

### How Do You Get LGV?

LGV is passed through direct contact with lesions, ulcers or other areas where bacteria are located, generally during vaginal, oral and anal sex. It may also be passed through direct skin-to-skin contact or through the sharing of sex toys.

### How Do You Know You Have LGV?

LGV is very difficult to diagnose.

#### The infection advances in three stages:

##### Stage 1:

- 3 to 30 days after exposure.
- Small, painless sore at site of infection. On areas of the vagina, anus, penis or mouth.
  - Painful urination.

*NOTE: The sore may or may not be noticed! However, an infected person is still contagious.*

##### Stage 2:

- 2 to 6 weeks after exposure.
- Swollen lymph nodes.
- Fever and/or chills.

- Loss of appetite.
- Muscle and joint aches.
- Primary sore can develop into an ulcer (and remain undetected in penis, vagina or anus.)
  - Unusual discharge.
  - Inflammation/swelling in groin or pelvic nodes.

Stage 3:

If left untreated, LGV can cause serious health problems.

- Hemorrhoid-like growth.
- Massive swelling of reproductive organs.
- Rectal ulcers.

*If you are experiencing any of these symptoms or any other unusual symptoms in the genital area, please see a doctor as soon as possible.*

### **When Should I Be Tested For LGV?**

A person should see a doctor immediately if she or he is experiencing symptoms, and/or if their partner has LGV.

### **How Will a Doctor Test For LGV?**

The doctor may take a swab of the infected area, along with visual inspection. A blood test may also be required to confirm LGV.

### **What Happens if I Test Positive For LGV?**

- Make appointment with doctor to prescribe treatment
- **LGV is curable with antibiotics**, but you must finish all medication prescribed by the doctor (even if you are feeling better).
- Abstain from sexual activity for 21 days to allow the LGV to clear from your body. If you cannot avoid having sex for this time period, use protection for vaginal, oral and anal sex at all times.
  - Tell current sexual partner(s) about your diagnosis
- All current and past (within 60 days) sexual partners should be treated by a doctor as well. *Planned Parenthood or Eastern Health can help you with this.*
- Tell them that you have been diagnosed with LGV and let them know what their risks are.

*It is possible to contract LGV again, even if cured, through sexual contact with an infected person.*

### **What Happens If LGV is Left Undiagnosed?**

If left undiagnosed, LGV can cause serious health problems:

- Hemorrhoid-like growth.
- Massive swelling of reproductive organs.
- Rectal ulcers.
- Ulcers can increase risk of passing on or getting HIV.

## **How Can I Protect Myself From LGV?**

You will never be 100% protected from LGV when engaging in sex, even if you are using protection. However, proper and consistent use of safer sex practices can help to protect you from LGV.

*Here are the types of sex and tools to help protect your health:*

### **Vaginal Sex (including sex toys):**

Latex (external) condom, non-latex (external) condom OR internal condom

### **Oral Sex**

- **on penis:** non-lubricated external condom OR flavoured condom
- **on vagina/vulva:** dental dam
- **on anus:** dental dam

**Dental dams** can be made from an unrolled external condom (non-lubricated or flavoured). Snip off the tip of the condom and then cut up one side and unroll. *Please see 'dental dam' pamphlet for more information.*

### **Anal sex (including sex toys):**

Latex external condom OR non-latex external condom

### **Mutual Masturbation:**

Washing hands after masturbating your partner and before touching your own mouth and/or genital area.

## **Sexual Health Questions? We Have Answers!**

### **Location:**

47 St. Clare Avenue, St. John's, NL, A1C 2J9

### **Hours**

Monday: 9am – 4:30pm

Tuesday: 9am – 4:30pm

Wednesday: 9am – 4:30pm

Thursday: 12pm – 6:00pm

Friday: 9am – 4:30pm

### **Phone:**

579-1009

Toll Free: 1-888-NO MYTHS

(1-888-666-9847)

### **Website:**

[www.plannedparenthoodnlshc.com](http://www.plannedparenthoodnlshc.com)

### **Email:**

[pp.nlshc@gmail.com](mailto:pp.nlshc@gmail.com)

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