

# Lymphogranuloma venereum



Lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV) is a sexually transmitted infection caused by certain strains of the bacterium that causes chlamydia (*Chlamydia trachomatis*).



**LGV infection is a notifiable condition<sup>1</sup>**

## How LGV is spread

LGV is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a certain strain of *Chlamydia trachomatis* (types L1-L3) that can be passed on through anal or vaginal sex without a condom. LGV can infect the throat, genitals or anus and may spread to the lymph nodes in the groin.

## Signs and symptoms

The symptoms of LGV are varied and may appear 3-30 days after infection.

If you have a vagina, the first sign of infection is an ulcer on the vagina or cervix that often goes unnoticed. The infection then spreads to the lymph nodes in the groin area, which may become swollen.

If you have a penis, the first sign of infection may be an ulcer on the penis. The infection then spreads to the lymph nodes in the groin which may become swollen.

LGV can cause pain in the anal area, discharge and/or bleeding. LGV may also cause the feeling of being unable to properly empty your bowels.

## Diagnosis

Diagnosis is made by taking a swab test for *Chlamydia trachomatis*. If the swab test is positive it can be tested further to look for LGV.

## Incubation period

(time between becoming infected and developing symptoms)

3 to 30 days.

## Infectious period

(time during which an infected person can infect others)

Unknown, probably many months if untreated.

## Treatment

Treatment for LGV is with an antibiotic called Doxycycline typically for 3 weeks.

## Prevention

- > Seek medical attention if you develop symptoms.
- > All sexual partners need to be contacted, tested and treated, if needed. Even if partners have no symptoms they may be able to transmit infection to other sexual partners or reinfect you.
- > Avoid sexual contact until you and infected partners have completed treatment.
- > A follow-up test must be done to make sure that treatment has cured the infection.
- > Testing to exclude other sexually transmitted infections is advisable.

- > Use condoms and other barrier methods to prevent getting sexually transmitted infections, including LGV.
- > Get tested for sexually transmitted infections regularly (even if you do not have symptoms), particularly when you have new sexual partners.

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1 – In South Australia the law requires doctors and laboratories to report some infections or diseases to SA Health. These infections or diseases are commonly referred to as 'notifiable conditions'.

## Useful links

- > SA Health website:  
[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au)
  - Notifiable conditions - what to know when you have one
  - Avoiding sexually transmitted infections
  - Chlamydia (genital) - including symptoms, treatment and prevention

## You've Got What? Lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV)

Communicable Disease Control Branch

Telephone: 1300 232 272

Email: [HealthCommunicableDiseases@sa.gov.au](mailto:HealthCommunicableDiseases@sa.gov.au)

The SA Health Disclaimer for this resource is located at

[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/youvegotwhat](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/youvegotwhat)

Version 1.0. June 2023.

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