

Gonorrhea

Partner treatment fact sheet

Why am I getting this prescription/medication?

Your sex partner has been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection (STI) called gonorrhea. It can be spread through oral, vaginal, or anal sex. You may have the infection, even if you do not have any symptoms.

Gonorrhea can be treated with an antibiotic called cefixime (also known by the brand name Suprax). A healthcare provider gave your partner either pills or a prescription for you so you can get treated. Being treated for an STI this way, without seeing a healthcare provider, is called expedited partner therapy (EPT).

You may also get either pills or a prescription for medication used to treat chlamydia (either azithromycin or doxycycline). This is because chlamydia and gonorrhea are transmitted in the same way, often together.

Why is it important that I am treated for gonorrhea?

If you have gonorrhea and are not treated, you can experience serious health problems.

Untreated gonorrhea infections can cause infertility (not being able to get pregnant), pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), and higher risk of ectopic (outside of the uterus) pregnancy in women. It can lead to epididymitis in men, causing swollen and tender testicles, and infertility. Gonorrhea can also get into your blood stream and settle in your heart or joints causing arthritis or cardiovascular issues. This is called Disseminated gonococcal infection.

Without treatment you can pass gonorrhea on to your sex partners.

Allergic reactions

If you have signs of an allergic reaction, **call 911 or go to the emergency room right away.**

Signs of an allergic reaction include: trouble breathing, swelling of your mouth/lips, throat tightness, and/or itchy bumps on your skin.

Do NOT take this medicine if:

- You are allergic to cefixime or another medication in the same class of medicines, or have ever had a bad reaction, rash, or allergy to antibiotics.
- You have any serious long-term health problems like kidney, heart, or liver disease.
- You currently have lower stomach pain, pain during sex, pain or swelling in the testicles (balls), vomiting, or fever.
- If any of the above are true, see a healthcare provider immediately so they can ensure this is the best medicine for you and to rule out other infections.

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How to take the medicine

Take the pill(s) you were given with food.

If you throw up within an hour of taking your pills, you will need to see a healthcare provider to get more medicine or a different medication.

Wait at least 7 days after the *last* partner takes their medicine to have sex. Otherwise you could pass gonorrhea back to your treated partner, or other sex partners.

Do not share or give your medicine to someone else.

If this is the first time you have taken this medication, make sure you review the possible side effects and are with a responsible adult who can help you in case you have an allergic reaction.

If you are pregnant

Cefixime is safe to take during pregnancy. You should still see a healthcare provider as soon as possible to make sure you and your baby get the care you need. Additional STI testing for pregnant women is recommended, especially if you've had unprotected sex with a casual partner(s) or your partner has other sex partners.

If you are pregnant, or think you may be pregnant, and were given doxycycline in addition to cefixime, you should **not** take the pills. **Doxycycline** is **not** safe to take during pregnancy. Instead, see a healthcare provider as soon as possible. If you were given azithromycin in addition to cefixime, you may take the pill(s).