

Why am I receiving this prescription/medication?

You may have been exposed to a sexually transmitted infection (STI). Your sex partner has received treatment, so it is important you are treated properly. Getting treated this way, without seeing a health care provider yourself, is called expedited partner therapy or EPT.

What do I need to know about STIs?

Sexually transmitted infections (STI) spread through oral, vaginal, or anal sex. Most people don't have symptoms (signs of infection), so you may have an STI but not know it and pass it to others. Symptoms may include burning when you urinate (pee), or you may have discharge from the penis, vagina, or anus. Having one STI can increase your risk of getting other STIs, including HIV. Getting treated will cure this infection, avoid serious complications that may occur, and prevent spread of the infection. Pregnant women infected with STIs can potentially pass the infection to their babies and cause serious health problems.

Is it still important to see a doctor after EPT?

Yes. Visit a health care provider and get tested for STIs (including HIV), regardless of whether you take this medication. You can have more than one STI at a time. If you have symptoms of any kind, you need to be evaluated for conditions that need medicine for a longer period than what is offered through EPT.

What is this medicine and how do I take it?

Take medication as instructed. Continue your full dosage of medication, even if you feel better. The most common medications are listed below. Check the name of the medication given to you as there are multiple ways to treat.

Chlamydia	Gonorrhea	Trichomoniasis
Medication - Doxycycline: 100 milligrams(mg) orally twice daily for seven days. - Azithromycin: 1 gram(g) orally for one dose.	Medication - Cefixime: Take 800mg orally in a single dose.	Medication - Metronidazole: • <u>Males:</u> 2 grams(g) orally in a single dose. • <u>Females:</u> 500 milligrams(mg) orally twice daily for seven days. - Tinidazole: 2 grams(g) orally in a single dose.
Special Considerations - DO NOT take antacids (i.e., Tums, Roloids, Maalox) for one hour before or two hours after taking the medicine. - For doxycycline, swallow pills with a full glass of water to avoid throat and esophagus (food pipe) irritation. - Avoid lying down for at least 30 minutes after taking doxycycline.	Special Considerations - Your partner may have received a shot instead of pills. You received pills because EPT comes in pill form.	

- If you throw up in the hour after taking medication, contact a health care provider/local health department as it may not have worked.
- The medication you were given will only cure your infection; it will not cure other STIs. DO NOT share medicine. Take the entire amount to cure the infection.

Are there any side effects to the medication?

BEFORE taking this medication, read all directions on the label. There are usually no side effects. However, those who experience side effects report:

- Diarrhea, upset stomach, or dizziness (all the medications listed above)	- Yeast Infection (doxycycline, azithromycin, cefixime)
- Getting a sunburn much more easily (doxycycline)	- Metal taste in the mouth (metronidazole)

Side effects are usually not serious. If you have any side effects that do not go away or you have other concerns, contact a health care provider.

What if I miss a dose?

- Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

Are there reasons NOT to take the medicine and see a health care provider instead?

- If you are pregnant, may be pregnant, or are breastfeeding, you must not take certain antibiotics. Before taking this medication, contact a health care professional immediately for an examination.
- **ALLERGY WARNING:** BEFORE taking this medication, if you have ever had a reaction to an antibiotic (trouble breathing or a rash) or a known allergy to the medication you were given, DO NOT take this medication. Contact a health care provider for advice.
- You have a serious long-term (chronic) illness, such as kidney, heart, or liver disease.
- If you are currently taking another prescription medication, BEFORE taking this medication consult a pharmacist to ask about drug interactions.
- **Males:** If you have pain or swelling in the testicles (balls), this could be symptoms of complications (problems) that require medical follow-up.
- **Females:** If you have symptoms of abdominal or pelvic pain, it is important that you see a doctor to be certain you do not have pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID can be **serious** and lead to infertility, pregnancy problems, or chronic pelvic pain.

What do I do if I have a severe allergic reaction?

Symptoms of severe allergic reaction include trouble breathing, throat tightness, swelling of lips or tongue, or hives (itchy skin bumps). If you have any of these symptoms, call 911 or go to an emergency department immediately.

What should I do after taking the medicine?

- Do not have unprotected (condomless) sex for at least seven days; it takes that long for the medication to cure the infection.
- If you have symptoms that do not go away within seven days after taking medication, see a health care provider for more testing and treatment.
- Tell anyone you have had sexual interactions with in the past 60 days to get examined and treated.
- If you take medicine to treat chlamydia or gonorrhea, you should also be retested three months later to make sure you are cured.
- Having an STI makes it easier to get another STI. It is a good idea to get tested for all STIs when possible.

How do I tell my sex partners?

Telling your partners that you may have an STI can be hard, but it is the right thing to do. By offering EPT, you are showing you care. Call a trusted health care provider or local health department if you need help telling your sexual partner(s) of potential STI exposure.

If you feel you cannot safely tell your partner(s) or may be harmed, talk with a trusted health care provider or local health department.

How can I avoid STIs in the future?

- Encourage your sexual partner(s) to be tested for STIs.
- Consider utilizing HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PreP) services. Information can be found [here](#).
- Get tested for STIs on a regular basis (about every 6-12 months) and when you have new sex partner(s).
- Use a new [latex condom](#) with every sexual act (oral, vaginal, anal). There are also female [condoms](#). For oral sex, [dental dams](#) can be used.
- Limit the number of people you have sex with. The more partners you have, the higher your risk of getting an STI.

If I have additional questions about this medication and other STIs, who can I contact? Call the confidential STI/HIV hotline 800-243-2437 or your trusted health care provider.

To find STI/HIV testing in your area, visit <https://gettested.cdc.gov/> or call your local health department.

For more information about STIs, visit the IDPH website at <http://dph.illinois.gov/> or the CDC website: https://www.cdc.gov/STI/healthcomm/fact_sheets.htm.

Sample Script:
 "This medication/prescription is to cure an STI called (____). I am taking medicine and you should too since you also might have the infection. You should read the information that came with the medicine and go to a health care provider to get checked for other STIs."

