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Hamilton

## **MEDICAL ADVISORY**

### **Updated Guidelines for Gonorrhea**

TO: Family Physicians  
Emergency Departments  
St. Joseph's Centre for Ambulatory Health Services, Urgent Care  
Infectious Disease Physicians

For Your Information:  
Academy of Medicine  
Dr. Richard McLean, VP Medical, Hamilton Health Sciences  
Dr. Peter Fitzgerald, President McMaster Children's Hospital  
Dr. Thomas Stewart, Chief of Staff, St. Joseph's Healthcare  
Central West Medical Officers of Health  
LHIN, Dr. Jennifer Everson, Jodi Sanders

FROM: Dr. Ninh Tran

DATE: July 23, 2019

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Please note updated and/or new Public Health Ontario (PHO) documents for the testing and treatment of Gonorrhea:

- Bacterial STI Testing: Quick Reference : A testing algorithm that summarizes the current testing options for gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis in Ontario (attached)
- Gonorrhea Treatment Quick Reference for Adolescents and Adults: A summary of gonorrhea treatment recommendations in Ontario (attached)
- Lababstract for Chlamydia trachomatis and Neisseria gonorrhoeae - Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing: includes addition of vaginal NAAT swab (attached)
- Ontario Gonorrhea Testing and Treatment Guide, 2nd Edition
- Ontario Gonorrhea Testing and Treatment Guide, 2nd Edition, Summary of Recommendations

These documents are located on PHO's website <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/> as well as Hamilton Public Health's web page for Health Professionals: <https://www.hamilton.ca/public-health/health-professionals>

#### LOCAL CONTEXT:

Rates of sexually transmitted infections continue to rise in Hamilton and Ontario. In 2018, 467 new cases of Gonorrhea were reported locally with majority of cases seen in males. Rates of all sexually transmitted infections (STI) in Hamilton in 2018 increased to nearly double the rate that was observed between 2005 and 2010. From January to June 30, 2019 in Ontario Gonorrhea has increased 14% over the same period last year.

## SUMMARY of RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Testing for Gonorrhea:

As part of our continuing effort to encourage adherence to current guidelines, please note the following:

- All sexually active individuals who have signs and symptoms of Gonorrhea should be tested at the urogenital, rectal and pharyngeal sites where they report unprotected sexual exposure and signs/symptoms.
- Offer screening to asymptomatic sexually active individuals with risk factors for Gonorrhea. Most rectal and pharyngeal gonococcal infections are asymptomatic. Testing at these sites is currently recommended among certain high-risk groups when receptive sexual exposure has occurred. These groups are:
  - Men who have sex with men (MSM)
  - People who engage in sex work and their sexual contacts
  - Known sexual contacts of those infected with Gonorrhea
- Testing for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea is now available via vaginal swab (clinician and/or self collected) using the Hologic Aptima® Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit\* which has been validated by PHO and the public health laboratory. This method of collection has greater sensitivity in most cases than endocervical or urine testing in females.  
\*Note that clinicians who use private labs must use the specified collection kit and attach a Public Health lab requisition. See attached Lababstract.
- Consider testing for other sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs), including Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

### Treatment for Gonorrhea

The continued recommended first line therapy of individuals with confirmed or suspected uncomplicated urogenital, rectal or pharyngeal Gonorrhea and their sex partners is:

**Ceftriaxone 250 mg intramuscularly (IM) plus Azithromycin 1 g orally (PO) given at the same visit.**

- First-line dual therapy is the strong preference due to compelling evidence of efficacy and current antimicrobial susceptibility patterns in Ontario.
- Alternative therapeutic options are less effective and only to be considered if first-line therapy is not possible and must be followed by a test of cure.
- Locally, 1st line treatment adherence has improved from 64.4% (2017) to 80% (2018).
- Second-line therapeutic options such as those using Cefixime are less effective and must be followed by a test of cure.
- Free STI medication is available to clinicians to order <https://www.hamilton.ca/public-health/health-professionals>

For further questions, please contact Dr. Ninh Tran, AMOH at 905-546-2424 x7113 or [Ninh.Tran@hamilton.ca](mailto:Ninh.Tran@hamilton.ca)

### Attachments:

Bacterial STI Testing Quick Reference

Gonorrhea Treatment Quick Reference for Adolescents and Adults

Lababstract: Chlamydia trachomatis and Neisseria gonorrhoeae - Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing