

Expedited Partner Therapy: Information Sheet for Patients and Partners

You have been offered expedited partner therapy (EPT). This information sheet contains important information and warnings you need to be aware of, so please read it carefully.

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) is the clinical practice of treating the sexual partners of persons who receive a chlamydia, gonorrhea, or trichomoniasis diagnosis by providing additional medications or prescriptions to the patient. Patients then provide their partners with these therapies without the health-care provider having examined the partner. EPT is a convenient, fast, and private way for patients to help their sexual partners get treated.

Chlamydia (CT), gonorrhea (GC), and trichomoniasis (TV) are infections you get from having sex with a person who is already infected. Many people with these infections do not know it because they feel fine, but without treatment these infections can cause serious health problems, such as pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy, infertility, and increased risk of HIV.

It is important to get treated as soon as possible to protect your health, to avoid spreading the infection to others, and to prevent yourself from becoming re-infected. The good news is these infections can be easily cured with proper antibiotic medicine. The best way to take care of yourself is to see a doctor or go to your local health department. If you are not able to see a doctor or other medical provider, EPT is a safe option.

Recommended Medications

For sexual partners of patients with Chlamydia:

Doxycycline 100 mg orally 2 times/day for 7 days

Note: When prescribing or dispensing EPT for Chlamydia, Azithromycin 1 gram orally should be substituted for Doxycycline when partner is, or might be, pregnant; or if partner is unlikely to adhere to 7-day regimen.

For sexual partners of patients with Gonorrhea only:

Cefixime (Suprax) 800 mg orally in a single dose.

For sexual partners of patients with GC who are co-infected with CT, or for whom a CT result is not available:

Cefixime (Suprax) 800 mg orally in a single dose PLUS Doxycycline (Vibramycin) 100mg BID x 7 days.

Note: When prescribing or dispensing EPT for Gonorrhea, Azithromycin 1 gram orally should be substituted for Doxycycline when partner is, or might be, pregnant; or if partner is unlikely to adhere to 7-day regimen.

For sexual partners of patients with Trichomoniasis:

Female Partners: Metronidazole 500 mg BID x 7 days.

Male Partners: Metronidazole 2 grams orally, as a single dose

These medicines are very safe. However, you should not take them if: you have ever had an allergic reaction (like a rash) to any of these medicines: azithromycin (Zithromax), doxycycline (Vibramycin), metronidazole, (Flagyl), erythromycin, clarithromycin (Biaxin). You should not take Doxycycline if you are currently pregnant. If you are uncertain about whether you have an allergy, call your doctor or pharmacist before taking this medicine. If you have a serious, long-term illness like kidney, liver or heart disease, colitis, or stomach problems, or you are currently taking other prescription medication, talk to your doctor before taking this medication.

Pregnant Women: It is very important for you to see a doctor to get pregnancy services and pre-natal care. Most of the antibiotics for EPT are safe for pregnant women, but you still need to see a doctor as soon as possible. Doxycycline should NOT be taken by someone who is pregnant. If you are pregnant or may be pregnant and have received doxycycline, do not take it, and seek medical treatment through your own physician or local health department.

Women: If you have lower belly pain, pain during sex, vomiting, or a fever, do **NOT** take this medicine. Instead, you should 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. **Men:** If you have pain or swelling in the testicles or a fever, do **NOT** take this medicine and see a doctor.

Men who have sex with men (MSM): MSM in Michigan continue to experience high rates of syphilis and HIV. Many MSM with gonorrhea or chlamydia could also have syphilis and/or HIV and not know it. If you are an MSM, it is important that you see a medical provider and are tested for HIV and syphilis.

Along with this information sheet is the medicine or a prescription for the medicine. If you receive a prescription it will be in your name and will indicate your date of birth, or it will be in the name of "Expedited Partner Therapy" with January 1 of the current year listed as the date of birth. In either case, you can have the prescription filled at a pharmacy. You will be responsible for the cost of the medicine unless you have prescription drug coverage. In that case, if you choose, you can provide your name so the pharmacy can bill your health plan.

Things to Know Before Taking the medication: Take the medication as directed (see instructions below). When taking antibiotics, some people may have mild, upset stomach, nausea and/or diarrhea which does not last long. It is important to remember that if you have any symptoms of an allergic reaction (itchy skin rash, swelling in face or tongue, hives, and/or difficulty in breathing), go to your local Emergency Department or Urgent Care facility for immediate care. Make sure to finish **ALL** the medication, even if you have no symptoms or your symptoms have gone away. After taking the medicine, **do not have sex for 7 days**. Do not share this medicine or give it to anyone else. It is important to tell everyone you have had sex with in the last 60 days that they need to go to the doctor to be tested for sexually transmitted infections.

Ways to prevent these and other sexually transmitted diseases (STIs):

- Abstain from sex. This is the only sure way to avoid getting an STI.
- Use barrier methods, such as condoms, consistently and correctly.
- Limit the number of sexual partners.
- Have regular physical exams, including testing for STIs.

For more information about EPT or other issues pertaining to STI, please contact your health professional, local health department, or the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services STI Program at (517) 241-0870 or www.michigan.gov/hivstd.

Medication Instructions for Expedited Partner Therapy

Azithromycin (Zithromax) used to treat partners exposed to chlamydia and some pregnant women exposed to gonorrhea

- Do **NOT** take this medication if you are allergic to azithromycin, erythromycin, clarithromycin, or telithromycin.
- Do **NOT** take this medication if you have liver disease.
- Avoid aluminum and magnesium containing antacids for 2 hours after taking this medication.

Cefixime (Suprax) used to treat partners exposed to gonorrhea

- You will take both tablets at the same time with or without food.
- Do **NOT** take this medication if you are allergic to cefixime, Penicillin and/or cephalosporin antibiotics (Ceftin, Cefzil, Keflex, Omnicef).

Doxycycline (Vibramycin) used to treat partners exposed to gonorrhea

- You will take one pill twice a day (every 12 hours) over the next 7 days. If you forget to take a dose, just take 1 pill when you remember.
- Do **NOT** double up on pills if you miss a dose.
- Do **NOT** take if you are **PREGNANT**, nursing, allergic to tetracyclines, have liver or kidney disease, or are taking isotretinoin (acne medication).
- Take all the medication with a full glass of liquid and remain upright for 30-60 minutes.
- This medication may be taken with food or milk.
- Doxycycline can make birth control pills less effective, so use another form of birth control (such as condoms, foams, and abstinence) until you finish taking the doxycycline and start a new cycle of birth control pills.
- Avoid antacids, Pepto-Bismal, and vitamins that contain iron while taking this medication.
- This medication may increase levels of digoxin (heart medication) and theophylline (asthma medication) and may increase the effects of warfarin (blood thinner).
- This medication may cause yeast infections and increased sensitivity to sunlight (sunburn).

Metronidazole (Flagyl) used to treat partners exposed to trichomoniasis

- Do **NOT** take this medication if you are nursing, taking prescription medications for alcoholism, or if you have liver disease.
- Use as directed**
- This medication may enhance the effects of warfarin (blood thinner) and may increase lithium (psychiatric medication) and phenytoin (seizure medications) levels.
- This medication may cause metallic taste, yeast infections, dizziness, and tingling in the arms and legs.

This information sheet was produced by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services in compliance with Public Act 525 of 2014, MCL 333.5110.