

## Expedited Partner Therapy: Information Sheet for Patients and Partners

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***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 chlamydia or gonorrhea diagnoses by providing medications or prescriptions to the patient. Patients then provide partners with these therapies without the health-care provider having examined the partner. In other words, EPT is a convenient, fast and private way for patients to help their sexual partners get treated.

Chlamydia and gonorrhea are bacterial infections you get from having sex with a person who is already infected. Many people with these infections don't 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 these infections 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 your self 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, you should take EPT.

### **Recommended Medication**

**EPT for Chlamydia:** Azithromycin (Zithromax) 1 gram orally in a single dose.

**EPT for Gonorrhea:** Cefixime (Suprax) 400 milligrams orally in a single dose PLUS Azithromycin (Zithromax) 1 gram orally in 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), erythromycin, clarithromycin (Biaxin). 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.

**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.

**Pregnant Women:** It is very important for you to see a doctor to get pregnancy services and pre-natal care. These antibiotics for EPT are safe for pregnant women, but you still need to see a doctor as soon as possible. It is also important to note that Doxycycline is an alternative therapy for chlamydia, but it should not be taken by someone who is pregnant.

**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 a man who has sex with other men, it is very important that you see a doctor or other 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" and January 1 of the current year will be 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, you could provide your name so the pharmacy could bill your health plan.

Take the medication as directed. Some people will have a mild, upset stomach, which does not last long. 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 (STDs):

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

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

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