

When can I have sex again?

You will be advised not to have sex (even oral sex and sex with condoms), until after you (and your partner) have finished the treatment and you have no symptoms.

It's really important that you don't have sex with your partner before they are tested and treated as you could become infected again.

What happens if my LGV is left untreated?

If your LGV is untreated, it can be passed on to your sexual partners.

Some types of LGV can cause scarring and swelling of the skin and blockages in the bowel. It can also cause permanent swelling of the genitals. Rarely the infection may spread via the bloodstream causing inflammation of the joints or liver.

How can I prevent myself from getting LGV again?

Using condoms correctly and every time you have sex will reduce your risk of getting LGV.

If you have a new partner it is a good idea for both of you to have a sexual health screen before any unprotected sex.

You can order more copies of this leaflet free of charge from www.healthpromotion.ie

**Sexual Health &
Crisis Pregnancy Programme**



A guide to **Lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV)** for men who have sex with men (MSM)

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What is LGV?

Lymphogranuloma venereum, or LGV, is a type of chlamydia. LGV is mainly diagnosed in men who have sex with men (MSM).

How common is LGV?

LGV is not a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) but more cases have been occurring in MSM since the early 2000's in Europe, including Ireland.

In Ireland, a high number of men diagnosed with LGV are also living with HIV – however you don't have to be HIV positive to get LGV.

How do I get LGV?

You can catch LGV through unprotected anal, oral or vaginal sex, rimming (mouth-to-anus contact), fingering or sharing sex toys with someone who has the infection.

You cannot catch LGV from:

- hugging
- kissing
- sharing cutlery or towels
- swimming pools or saunas
- sitting on toilet seats.

What symptoms would I have with LGV?

Symptoms often develop around 3 days to 3 weeks after sexual contact. In MSM, it is mostly seen in the rectum (back passage).

Symptoms include:

Anus: Rectal pain, bleeding or pus from the back passage. You may feel like you need to open your bowels all the time. Constipation or diarrhoea may also occur.

Penis: Painless blisters (sores), discharge, swelling in the groin area.

Mouth: Sore throat, swollen glands in the neck.

What does a test for LGV involve?

The test for LGV is the same type of test that is used for chlamydia. A swab can be taken from the rectum (back passage), vagina, throat, or an ulcer (if you have one).

The sample is initially tested for chlamydia. If it tests positive for chlamydia and your doctor suspects LGV infection, further specialist testing for LGV is carried out.

How is LGV treated?

LGV is usually treated with an antibiotic called doxycycline for 3 weeks.

Usually there are no lasting effects, as long as the infection is treated correctly.

Will I need a repeat test to make sure the infection has cleared?

You will be asked to return for another test after your treatment to confirm you have cleared the infection.

What about my partner?

If you have LGV, your current partner (or partners) will also be offered testing and treatment.

It is important that all of the people you have recently been in sexual contact with are given the option to be tested and treated. Your doctor or nurse will discuss this with you.