

What is lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV)?

LGV is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by a specific strain of bacteria called *Chlamydia*. It usually affects the lymph glands in the genital area.

Who gets LGV?

Most LGV is found among sexually active persons living in tropical or subtropical climates. LGV is not very common in the United States.

What are the symptoms of LGV?

The first symptom may be a small, painless pimple or lesion occurring on the penis or vagina. It is often unnoticed. The infection then spreads to the lymph nodes in the groin area and from there to the surrounding tissue. Complications may include inflamed and swollen lymph glands which may drain and bleed.

How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?

The onset of symptoms varies widely. The first lesion may appear from 3 to 30 days after exposure.

How is LGV spread?

The infection is spread through direct contact with open lesions of infected people, usually during sexual contact.

For how long can an infected person spread the bacteria to others?

An individual remains infectious as long as there are active lesions present on the body.

What is the treatment for LGV?

LGV is treated with antibiotics generally by mouth for two weeks. It is important to finish all of the medication prescribed by your doctor.

How can LGV be prevented?

Not having sex is the only sure way to avoid getting LGV. Otherwise, limiting the number of one's sexual partners reduces the chance of being exposed. Using condoms correctly with all partners will decrease the possibility of becoming infected with LGV or any other STD. If you think you are infected, avoid any sexual contact until you have visited a doctor, hospital or STD clinic. If you are infected, notify your sex partners immediately so they can be tested and treated.

How can I get more information about LGV?

- If you have concerns about LGV, call your healthcare provider.
- If you have questions about any sexually transmitted disease, including LGV, please call the Virginia Disease Prevention Hotline at 1-800-533-4148.

Lymphogranuloma Fact Sheet

- Call your local health department. A directory of local health departments is located at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/local-health-districts/>.

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