

## **LGV** **(Lymphogranuloma Venereum)**

### **What is LGV?**

LGV stands for **lymphogranuloma venereum**. It is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a certain type of chlamydia. Chlamydia is a STI which is very common and easily spread.

LGV has not usually been found in Canada until more recently, although LGV is found all over the world. Since the beginning of 2004, more than 20 cases of LGV have been found in Canada.

### **How is LGV spread?**

LGV can be spread through unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex.

### **What are the possible symptoms of LGV?**

- The first symptom may be a small, painless sore on the penis, vagina or rectum which may go away on its own. This may appear anywhere from 3 to 30 days after being infected.
- The next symptoms may be swollen, painful lymph nodes in the groin area, which may drain or bleed, as well as blood or mucous discharge from the anus. These symptoms can appear 2 to 6 weeks after infection.
- People will often have “flu-like” symptoms such as fever, chills, tiredness, aches and pains.

### **Is LGV treatable?**

Yes, LGV can be treated with certain antibiotics. If left untreated, LGV can spread to the lymph nodes and cause genital and/or anal scarring and destruction. In severe cases, LGV can lead to death.

### **Who is most at-risk for LGV?**

Although anyone who has unprotected sex (sex with no condom) is at risk for LGV, all of the cases that have been seen in Canada have been in men who have sex with men.

The risk of infection increases for high-risk sexual activities, such as:

- unprotected sex
- anal “fisting”
- anonymous sex
- use of the drug crystal meth anally before sex

### **What can be done to help prevent the spread of LGV?**

- Use condoms and other barriers (i.e. dental dams) for all vaginal, anal and oral sex.
- Wash genitals after sexual contact.
- Get tested for other STIs such as HIV, hepatitis C, hepatitis B, gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, and herpes. It may be easier to get LGV if you already have another one of these infections. Having LGV also increases the risk of getting HIV, hepatitis C and other STIs.

### **What should someone do if they think they have LGV?**

If you think you may have LGV or have had sex with someone who has LGV, please see your health care provider for more information. Specialized testing and treatment is needed for LGV.

**For more information call Peel Public Health  
905-799-7700  
and ask for  
Sexual Health Information  
or visit  
[intheknowpeel.ca](http://intheknowpeel.ca)    [peelsexualhealth.ca](http://peelsexualhealth.ca)  
[peelregion.ca/health](http://peelregion.ca/health)**