

New York State Department of Health

Lymphogranuloma Venereum (LGV)

Last Reviewed: November 2006

What is lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV)?

LGV is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) or infection involving the lymph glands in the genital area. It is caused by a specific strain of *Chlamydia*.

Who gets LGV?

The incidence is highest among sexually active people living in tropical or subtropical climates. It has also occurred in some areas of the southern United States.

How is LGV spread?

The infection is spread by sexual contact.

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 do symptoms appear?

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

When and for how long is a person able to spread LGV?

An individual remains infectious as long as there are active lesions.

What is the treatment for LGV?

Treatment involves the use of certain antibiotics, specifically tetracycline or sulfamethoxazole.

What can be done to prevent the spread of LGV?

There are a number of ways to prevent the spread of LGV:

- Limit your number of sex partners.
- Use a male or female condom.
- Carefully wash genitals after sexual relations.
- If you think you are infected, avoid any sexual contact and visit your local STD clinic, a hospital or your doctor.
- Notify all sexual contacts immediately so they can obtain examination and treatment.

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