



Centre for Disease Control

NT HEALTH

Public Health Alert

Issued: 23 October 2023
Issued to: Health staff, NT wide

Penicillinase-producing *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (PPNG): changes treatment recommendations for gonorrhoea NT wide

Summary

- Rates of penicillin-resistant gonorrhoea in the NT outside of Darwin have historically been low
- Since January 2023, 34 cases of PPNG have been detected in the Northern Territory (NT), mostly in Central Australia
- All uncomplicated gonococcal infections across the NT should now be treated with ceftriaxone based treatments (see below) to prevent further spread

Change to 1st line treatment of all uncomplicated gonorrhoea in the NT

All cases of **suspected** or **confirmed** uncomplicated genital and anorectal gonorrhoea should be treated with:

- **Ceftriaxone 500mg in 1.8mL 1% lignocaine IM single dose AND**
- **Azithromycin 1g oral single dose**

Ensure **complete STI testing** has been done including serology for HIV and syphilis. **Retest** three months after treatment as risk of reinfection is high.

Amoxicillin/probenecid/azithromycin combinations (ZAP packs) are no longer considered effective 1st line treatment of gonorrhoea in the NT.

Contact tracing for PPNG cases

Urgent contact tracing is needed. Sexual contacts in the previous 2 months should:

- Have a **full STI screen** (consider including a swab or urine for culture) AND
- Be **treated** on the same day **with ceftriaxone and azithromycin** as above

PPNG

- When *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* produces the enzyme called penicillinase it is no longer susceptible to penicillin treatment (ZAP packs) and is called PPNG.

Centre for Disease Control
Public Health Division

☎ (08) 8922 8044 or 1800 008 002
✉ CDCSurveillance.DARWIN@nt.gov.au

Testing for PPNG

- Since September 2023 Western Diagnostic Pathology has joined Territory Pathology in routinely testing all positive gonorrhoea specimens for PPNG
- You will notice a PPNG PCR result in all positive gonorrhoea results from these labs

Contact & advice

- Clinic 34 is the NT's specialist sexual health service and their staff can provide further clinical advice if needed. Contact through clinic34.ths@nt.gov.au or via your local CDC unit.

CDC Darwin	Ph 8922 8044	Fax 8922 8310	cdcsurveillance.darwin@nt.gov.au
CDC Alice Springs	Ph 8951 7540 0436 667 809	Fax 8951 7900	cdc.alicesprings@nt.gov.au
CDC Katherine	Ph 8973 9049	Fax 8973 9048	cdc.katherine@nt.gov.au
CDC Tennant Creek	Ph 8962 4259	Fax 8962 4420	cdc.barkly@nt.gov.au
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Issued by: Director, Centre for Disease Control, Public Health Division, NT Health