**Acute Salpingitis**

**Introduction**
Acute salpingitis is a type of infection that affects the Fallopian tubes. The Fallopian tubes carry eggs from the ovaries to the uterus. Acute salpingitis is one of the most common causes of infertility in women. Treatment may include antibiotics or, in some cases, surgery.

This reference summary will help you understand acute salpingitis and its causes. It talks about the female reproductive system. It also covers symptoms, complications and treatment for acute salpingitis.

**The Female Reproductive System**
The reproductive system is made up of organs located in the pelvis. They are found between the urinary bladder and the rectum.

The female reproductive organs include:
- The ovaries.
- The Fallopian tubes.
- The uterus.
- The cervix.
- The vagina.

Ovaries release eggs. The Fallopian tubes carry eggs from the ovaries to the uterus. The lower part of the uterus is the cervix. The cervix is the passageway to the vagina. The vagina opens to the outside of the body. The opening is found between the urethra and the rectum. The urethra is where urine comes out of the body. The rectum is the last part of the large intestine.
Acute Salpingitis

Acute salpingitis is when the Fallopian tubes become infected or inflamed. It is often caused by bacteria.

When a Fallopian tube is infected, it can collect too much fluid or pus. This can permanently scar and damage the Fallopian tube. Damage to the Fallopian tube can cause infertility. This means that a woman cannot get pregnant naturally. Acute salpingitis is one of the most common causes of infertility in women. This happens when the Fallopian tubes become blocked due to inflammation and scarring. Acute salpingitis can cause infection in other parts of the pelvic area, such as the uterus and ovaries.

Acute salpingitis is often called pelvic inflammatory disease, or PID. This is not always correct. PID can mean an infection in many parts of the female reproductive system. Acute salpingitis does not always involve other parts of the reproductive system.

Acute salpingitis can also lead to severe problems if it is not treated. Some of these problems include:

- Chronic or ongoing pelvic pain.
- Ectopic pregnancy.

Ectopic pregnancy happens outside the womb, or uterus. It is life threatening to the mother. The baby cannot survive.

Symptoms

Many women do not know they have acute salpingitis because they do not have any symptoms. If symptoms are present, they can range from mild to severe. The most common symptom is pain in the abdomen or lower back.

Other symptoms of acute salpingitis include:

- Fever.
- Foul-smelling or heavy vaginal discharge.
- Frequent urination.
Acute salpingitis can also cause:

- Nausea or vomiting.
- Pain during sexual intercourse.
- Painful or irregular periods.

Acute salpingitis can start suddenly. It can cause extreme pain and fever. This is often the case if acute salpingitis is caused by an infection called gonorrhea.

Causes

Acute salpingitis is almost always caused by bacteria. A woman can get acute salpingitis if bacteria infect her pelvic organs. The bacteria can enter the body through the vagina. This can cause the organs to get infected. This can lead to severe organ damage.

Many different types of bacteria can cause acute salpingitis. But most cases are caused by gonorrhea or chlamydia. Gonorrhea and chlamydia are two types of STIs. STIs are sexually transmitted infections. You can get an STI by having sexual contact with an infected person. It can take from a few days to a few months for acute salpingitis to develop. The infection may take a while to travel up from the vagina to the Fallopian tubes.

You can get acute salpingitis without having an STI. Normal bacteria found in the vagina and on the cervix can sometimes cause acute salpingitis. No one is sure why this happens.

Diagnosis

See a health care provider right away if you think you may have acute salpingitis. Your health care provider will perform a physical exam. This includes a pelvic exam. A pelvic exam checks the organs in the pelvis for signs of disease.
During a pelvic exam, your health care provider will check for:
- Abnormal discharge from your vagina or cervix.
- Lumps near your ovaries and Fallopian tubes.
- Tenderness or pain in your pelvic organs.

Your health care provider will also test you for STIs. A sample of urine may be tested to rule out a urinary tract infection. Your urine may also be tested to make sure you are not pregnant. An ultrasound can help detect acute salpingitis. This test uses sound waves to take pictures of the pelvic area. It can show changes in the pelvic organs. Acute salpingitis can also be diagnosed with a laparoscopy. A small, lighted tube is inserted through a cut in your abdomen. This tube allows the pelvic organs to be viewed.

If you are diagnosed with acute salpingitis, tell your sexual partner or partners to get tested. Infection is often spread through sexual contact. The bacteria can infect your partner without causing symptoms. They may spread the infection to others.

**Treatment**

The infections that cause acute salpingitis can usually be cured with drugs called antibiotics. These drugs kill bacteria. Most people are treated with at least two antibiotics at one time. Your health care provider will decide the best treatment for you. You must take all of the medicine your health care provider gives you. Keep taking the medicine even if your symptoms go away. This helps to make sure your infection is gone. You should be seen 2 to 3 days after starting treatment. This is to make sure the antibiotics are working.
Your health care provider may suggest going to a medical facility to treat your acute salpingitis if you:

- Are pregnant.
- Are very sick.
- Do not respond to the medicine or cannot swallow pills.
- Have an abscess, or sore, in a Fallopian tube or ovary.

You may need surgery if you still have symptoms after treatment. Problems caused by acute salpingitis can be hard to treat. But they can get better after surgery.

Any damage done to your pelvic organs before you start treatment likely cannot be undone. Still, do not put off getting treatment. If you do, you may not be able to have children. If you think you may have acute salpingitis, see a health care provider right away.

To protect yourself from getting acute salpingitis again:

- Do not have sex with a partner who has not been treated.
- Tell sex partners to get treated, even if they do not have symptoms.

**Prevention**

There are several risk factors that can make you more likely to develop acute salpingitis. Luckily, you can do a lot to reduce your risk and prevent it. You can reduce your risk of developing acute salpingitis by using condoms during sex and not having more than one sexual partner. This can also help prevent STIs from happening. STIs increase your chances of developing acute salpingitis.

Avoid douching. Douching is a way of washing out the vagina. Douching can push bacteria into the pelvic organs and cause infection. It can also hide the signs of an infection. Using an IUD for birth control also increases the risk of getting acute salpingitis. IUD stands for intrauterine device. You should get tested and treated for any infections before getting an IUD. This will lower your risk of having acute salpingitis.
Summary

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You can reduce your risk of developing acute salpingitis by using condoms during sex and not having more than one sexual partner. This can also help prevent STIs from happening. STIs increase your chances of developing acute salpingitis. The infections that cause acute salpingitis can usually be cured with drugs called antibiotics. These drugs kill bacteria. Most people are treated with at least two antibiotics at one time. Your health care provider will decide the best treatment for you.