

Sexually Transmitted Diseases/Infections

Non-gonococcal Urethritis (NGU)

Urethritis can occur in both males and females; however, for surveillance purposes, public health primarily focuses on non-gonococcal urethritis (NGU) in males. Most males diagnosed with NGU will present with penile discharge. A variety of organisms may cause NGU, including *Chlamydia trachomatis*, *Mycoplasma genitalium*, *Ureaplasma urealyticum*, *Trichomonas vaginalis*, and herpes simplex virus. Among these, *Chlamydia trachomatis* is the only causative organism that is both commonly tested for and reportable in North Carolina.

All patients with confirmed or suspected urethritis should be tested for both gonorrhea and chlamydia. At present, there is no designated public health funding in North Carolina to routinely screen males for chlamydia. Therefore, a diagnosis of NGU often serves as the best clinical indicator of potential chlamydial infection in men. In settings where diagnostic tools such as Gram-stain microscopy are unavailable, patients should be empirically treated with regimens that are effective against both *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

To report a confirmed case of NGU, documentation must include a negative gonorrhea test result and either evidence of urethral discharge, ≥ 5 white blood cells (WBCs) per high-power field on Gram stain of a urethral smear, or a positive leukocyte esterase test.

While NGU is a reportable condition in North Carolina, it is not currently reportable to the CDC.

For more information:

- CDC STD Treatment Manual 2021 – Diseases characterized by urethritis and cervicitis, <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/urethritis-and-cervicitis.htm>