

Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)

Pelvic inflammatory (in-FLAM-a-tor-ee) disease (PID) is an infection in the uterus, the fallopian tubes or the ovaries (Picture 1). The first symptoms usually occur during or just after a menstrual period. PID may also be caused by an untreated vaginal infection or by other things like surgery or pregnancy.

Early medical treatment is needed:

- To prevent continued abdominal pain
- To prevent damage to the fallopian tubes. Damaged tubes can make a female sterile (not able to have a baby).
- To prevent the infection from spreading to other parts of the body.

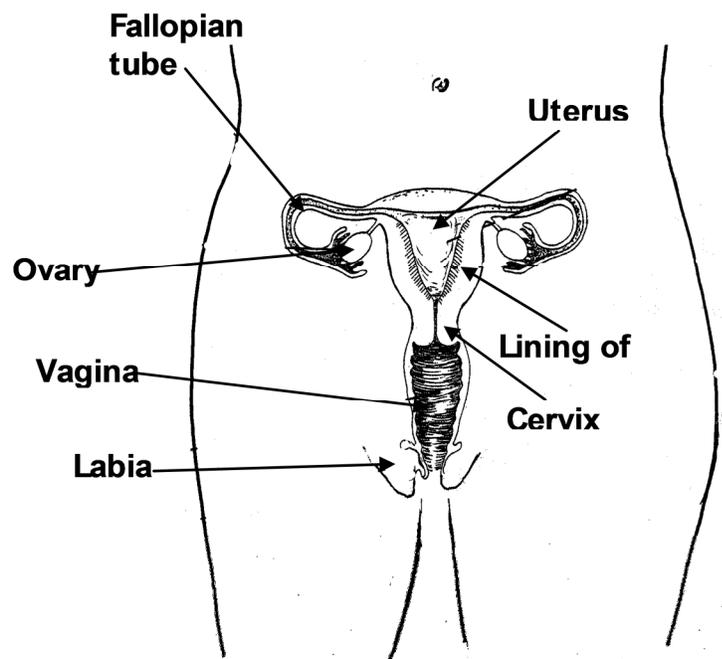
Symptoms of PID

The early symptoms of PID may be:

- Very strong cramps in the abdomen or lower belly pain
- Abnormal bleeding from the vagina (bleeding that is not your period)

Later symptoms may be:

- Pain in the lower abdomen
- Vaginal discharge
- Fever and chills
- Painful urination
- Pain when walking

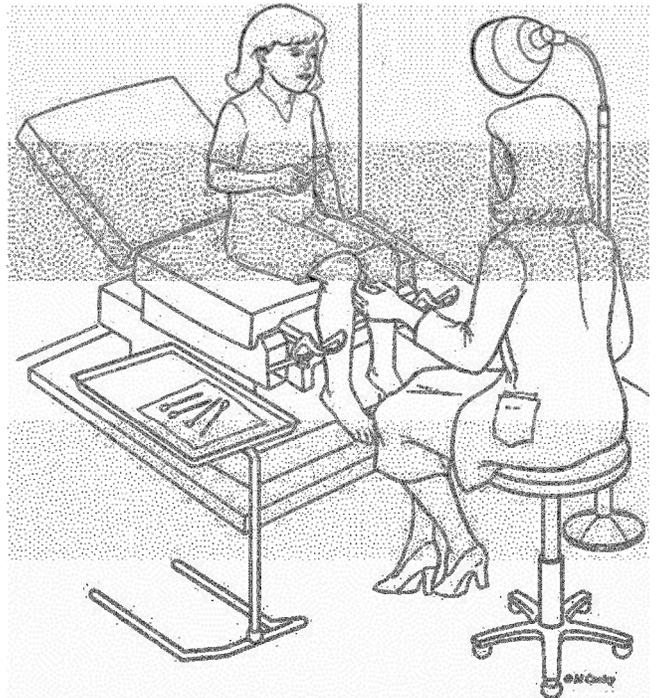


Picture 1 The female reproductive system inside the body..

Testing for PID

To find out if you have PID, these things will be done:

- You will be asked to wear a hospital gown and lie on a padded table for the exam.
- The doctor will examine you by pressing on your abdomen to find where the pain may be coming from.
- The doctor will use a metal or plastic speculum (SPEK-you-lum) to look inside your vagina. You will feel a little pressure, but it does not hurt unless you have sore places.
- If necessary, samples of vaginal secretions will be taken with a cotton swab (Picture 2). These will be sent to the lab and be examined under a microscope.



Picture 2 Preparing for a pelvic exam.

After the Exam

- The doctor will decide if any further tests or treatments are needed.
- If you are given a prescription, **take the medicine as prescribed until it is all gone, even though you may feel better.**
- You may have some light spotting after the exam.
- Bed rest helps ease the pain.

Other Advice

- If you are sexually active, your sexual partner needs to be examined and treated to keep you from getting the infection again.
- It is best not to have sex until you have been rechecked by the doctor.
- Use condoms to reduce the risk of getting the infection again.

Follow-Up Appointment

It is important that you follow up with your doctor in _____ days.

If you need a doctor for your child, call the Nationwide Children's Hospital Referral and Information Line at (614) 722-KIDS.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse.