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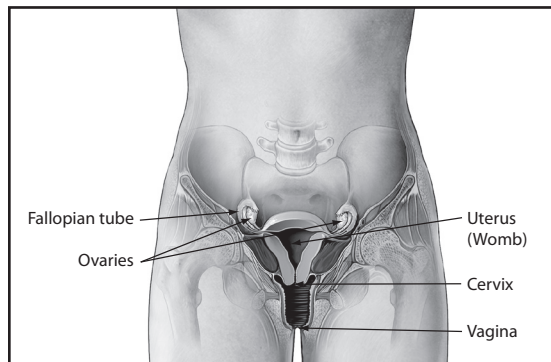
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# Pelvic Inflammatory Disease

**Q: What is pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)?**

**A:** Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) is an infection of a woman's pelvic organs. The pelvic organs include the uterus (womb), fallopian (fuh-LOH-pee-uhn) tubes (tubes), ovaries, and cervix.



**Q: What causes PID?**

**A:** A woman can get PID if bacteria (germs) move up from her vagina and infect her pelvic organs. Many different types of bacteria can cause PID. But, most cases of PID are caused by bacteria that cause 2 common sexually transmitted infections (STIs) — gonorrhea (gah-nuh-REE-uh) and chlamydia (kluh-MI-dee-uh). It can take from a few days to a few months for an infection to travel up from the vagina to the pelvic organs.

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

**Q: How common is PID?**

**A:** Each year in the United States, more than 1 million women have an episode of PID. More than 100,000 women become infertile each year because of PID. Also, many ectopic pregnancies that occur are due to problems from PID.

**Q: Are some women more likely to get PID?**

**A:** Yes. You're more likely to get PID if you:

- Have had an STI
- Are under 25 years of age and are having sex
- Have more than 1 sex partner
- Douche. Douching can push bacteria into the pelvic organs and cause infection. It can also hide the signs of an infection.
- Have an intrauterine device (IUD). You should get tested and treated for any infections before getting an IUD. This will lower your risk of getting PID.

**Q: How do I know if I have PID?**

**A:** Many women don't know they have PID because they don't have any symptoms. For women who have them, symptoms can range from mild to severe. The most common symptom of PID is pain in your lower abdomen (stomach area). Other symptoms include:

- Fever (100.4° or higher)
- Vaginal discharge that may smell foul





