

Testing for chlamydia - the "window period"

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A number of practitioners have asked for guidance on the question of when best to test for chlamydia using nucleic acid amplification tests (NAAT) following potential exposure to infection through unprotected sex.

The Clinical Effectiveness Group has taken advice from the Bacterial Special Interest Group of BASHH, and the following guidance is suggested:-

It is recommended that patients are encouraged to undergo testing for chlamydia with NAAT when they first present and, if they are concerned about exposure which has occurred within the last two weeks, that they are also advised to return for a repeat NAAT two weeks after the last exposure.

It is important to realise that there is no hard scientific evidence to answer this question. Therefore this guidance is based upon expert opinion, and as in all such cases must of course be interpreted with caution.

Dr Keith Radcliffe

Chairman

Clinical Effectiveness Group