



WOMEN'S HEALTH Policy Report



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THE DAILY REPORT



British Study Finds Vouchers for No-Cost Treatment Beneficial for Partners of Chlamydia Patients

June 14, 2010 — Giving people diagnosed with chlamydia a voucher that allows their sexual partners to obtain no-cost antibiotics increased the chances that the partner would seek the treatment, according to a British study published online on May 25 in *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology*, [Reuters](#) reports. The study's authors noted that treating both partners with antibiotics is important because the untreated person could re-infect the treated partner.

Lead author Sharon Cameron -- a gynecologist at the Dean Terrace Center in Edinburgh, Scotland -- said the choice of a voucher "gives individuals another option of where they would want to go be treated." She added that partners "may not feel they have an STI," or "they might be embarrassed to go to a clinic." [Reuters](#) reports that seeing a doctor is still considered the preferred option for the partners of people with chlamydia.

For the study, Cameron and colleagues distributed roughly 600 vouchers to people, mostly women, who were diagnosed with chlamydia. The vouchers allowed their sexual partners to visit a pharmacy for no-cost antibiotics, according to [Reuters](#).

The study found that 40% of the vouchers were redeemed at a pharmacy, often within a few days, while 4% of the partners sought treatment at one of the clinics the study's authors were tracking. The researchers reported that it was unclear whether the remaining partners sought treatment from their own primary care doctors or not at all. Cameron said the findings were comparable to the results of previous studies on the same strategy.

In the U.S., some states permit the distribution of extra antibiotics to patients with chlamydia to share with their sexual partners, but the practice is prohibited in the UK, according to [Reuters](#). [American Medical Association](#) ethics rules allow the practice as an option for the partners of people with chlamydia if the partners are unlikely to see a doctor (Pittman, [Reuters](#), 6/10).

The information contained in this publication reflects media coverage of women's health issues and does not necessarily reflect the views of the National Partnership for Women & Families.