

Trichomoniasis (Trichomonas Vaginalis)

What is Trichomoniasis?

Trichomoniasis ("trich") is an infection caused by a parasitic organism that can be transmitted through sexual contact. The most common site of infection for women is the vagina; in men the infection may affect the urethra, penis, or testicles.

- ◆ Trichomoniasis affects between two and three million people each year in the United States.
- ◆ Untreated Trichomoniasis can lead to serious infections of the urethra and bladder.

What are the symptoms of Trichomoniasis?

Women's symptoms may include:

- ◆ an increased vaginal discharge that may be green or yellow and frothy with a foul odor
- ◆ burning or itching in the genital area
- ◆ redness or swelling of the vagina
- ◆ painful urination
- ◆ vaginal pain during intercourse

Men's symptoms may include:

- ◆ painful or frequent urination

Some women and most men with trichomoniasis have no symptoms.

How can I get it?

Trichomoniasis can be transmitted:

- ◆ through vaginal sex or any direct contact with the infected area of a partner
- ◆ in very rare cases the trichomonas organism can be transmitted by moist objects such as towels, washcloths, or bathing suits.

How can I prevent Trichomoniasis?

Trichomoniasis can be prevented by:

- ◆ practicing abstinence or monogamy (you and your partner only have sex with each other)
- ◆ using a latex condom (rubber) every time you have sexual intercourse
- ◆ avoiding sex with partners who have any visible signs of an infection

What can I do to treat Trichomoniasis?

If you have been diagnosed with Trichomoniasis you may be prescribed one of the following antibiotic treatments:

_____ Metronidazole 500 mg. Take two pills in the morning and two in the evening for one day.

_____ Metronidazole 500 mg. Take one pill in the morning and one in the evening each day for seven days.

_____ Metronidazole 500 mg. Take four pills at once. (2 grams total)

The infection will be gone in 7 days after you have completed your medication. Do not have intercourse until 7 days AFTER both partners have completed their medication or you have re-infected yourself. Take the pills with food to prevent nausea. Non-dairy foods are recommended. **You must not miss any pills!** If you forget to take a pill, take it as soon as you remember, but **do not take more than one dose at a time.** Even if it seems like the infection has gone away you must take **ALL** of the pills or you will still have the infection.

Is there anything I should avoid while on this medication?

When taking Metronidazole you should absolutely not drink alcohol. The combination of the medication and alcohol can make you seriously ill.

Are there side effects from this medication?

Yes! Some common side effects that you may experience while being treated with Metronidazole are:

- ◆ nausea
- ◆ a metallic taste in your mouth

If you experience any of the following more serious side effects with any prescribed medication, be sure to call Family Planning Services, an emergency care clinic, or your family doctor. You should stop taking your medication and seek medical attention if the following symptoms occur:

- shortness of breath or wheezing
- ◆ hives or rash
- ◆ difficulty breathing
- ◆ seizures

Should my partner be treated?

Yes. If your culture has come back positive, your partner is assumed to be positive as well and needs to be treated. It is essential that your partner be treated so that you do not get re-infected with Chlamydia. **It is very important to abstain from sex while you and/or your partner are being treated and for at least one week (7 days) after finishing the medication.**

For more information visit:

American Social Health Association at <http://www.ashastd.org/>
Center for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.cdc.gov/std/>