

Trichomoniasis (Trichomonas Vaginalis)

Trichomoniasis (trick-o-moe-NYE-ah-sis), is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections (STI). It is caused by a parasite called *Trichomonas vaginalis*. The infection can happen to both men and women. It is passed during sexual contact with an infected person.

Symptoms

Males

Some males have a slight mucus-like discharge from the penis and slight pain or burning when they urinate. Most males have no symptoms but they may carry the germs and can pass them to their partner during sexual contact.

Females

- There can be a heavy, foamy, greenish-yellow discharge from the vagina.
- Females may have itching, redness and irritation in the genital area.
- Often there is pain or burning on urination.
- Some women have no symptoms, even though they carry the germs that cause trichomoniasis.

Diagnosis

The doctor will take a small amount of fluid from the penis or vagina. The sample will be placed on a glass slide to be examined under a microscope. A separate test to grow the germ in the laboratory may be done as well. The germ may also be detected from a Pap smear.

Treatment

If the *Trichomonas* germ is found, the doctor will write a prescription for antibiotics. The medicine must be taken as ordered to be effective.

- You and your partner must both be treated.
- You should wait for 1 week after your treatment before having sex.

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Treatment, continued

- Contact your health care provider if your symptoms do not go away after treatment.
- You need to contact your sex partner(s) so that he or she may receive treatment also.
- In the Columbus area, your partner(s) can be treated at the Columbus City Health Department, 240 Parsons Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43205. The phone number is (614) 645-7772. If you live outside the Columbus area, call your local health department.

Preventing Future Infection

Abstinence (not having sex) is the only 100% effective way to prevent Trichomoniasis, other STI's and HIV (the virus that causes AIDS). If you choose to have sex, you can do some things that might help prevent the spread of other STI's:

- Respect yourself and your partner.
- Limit the number of sexual partners. Know your partner and his or her sexual history.
- ALWAYS USE A LATEX CONDOM. Use it correctly. Use it every time you have sex, the whole time you have sex.
- Be prepared. Have another condom available in case the one you are using breaks.
- Avoid mind-altering substances such as alcohol and other drugs. You cannot make good decisions if you are drunk or high.
- Some STI's make it easier for HIV to enter the skin and mucous membranes. If you have an STI, you should consider being tested for HIV.
- It is a good idea for sexually active teens to be tested for STI'S at least once a year even if there are no symptoms.

If you have any questions, call the Adolescent Medicine Clinic at (614) 722-2450. For more information, you may also call the National STD Hotline at 1-800-227-8922, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or you can get information at <http://www.ashastd.org/sitemap.cfm>.