

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. If a pregnant woman has Trichomoniasis, it can cause problems with the pregnancy.

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

Females

If you have symptoms, the doctor or nurse practitioner will examine the genital area. They will take a sample of the discharge from your vagina. They may do an immediate test while you wait, or they may send the sample to a lab for testing. The germ may also be detected from a urine sample sent to the laboratory.

Males

A urine sample is taken to test for the germ.

Treatment

- If the Trichomonas germ is found, the doctor will write a prescription for antibiotics. The infection can be cured with antibiotics. For the infection to go away completely, you must take all of the medicine.
- You and your partner must both be treated. You need to contact your sex partner(s) so that he or she may receive treatment also.
- You should wait for 1 week after your treatment before having sex. Your partner needs to be treated before you have sexual contact again.
- If you do not think your partner will get treated on his or her own, tell your doctor. The doctor may be able to write a prescription for your partner to get treated.
- 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.

Follow-up

- You and your partner must BOTH be treated and need to have a follow-up doctor's visit if the symptoms do not go away. You need to come back for ALL follow-up appointments.
- You should be tested for Trichomoniasis and other infections again in 3 months.

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 to help prevent the spread of 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 body. If you have an STI, you should be 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>.