

Trichomonas: Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT)

Your partner was diagnosed with trichomonas (trik-uh-moh-niss), or “trich,” a sexually transmitted infection (STI), and was treated for this infection. You may also be infected and should be treated. This infection is serious but can be cured with antibiotics.

Your partner will give you a prescription for **metronidazole (met-roh-NIE-dah-zol)** to treat this infection. It is best for you to see a health care provider even if you took the medicine. **Please read all information in this handout before taking the medicine.**

How trichomonas spreads

- vaginal sex
- contact between genitals

Signs and symptoms

Trichomonas can be in the body with no symptoms.

Possible symptoms are:

- male at birth – pain when urinating (peeing), mucus coming out of the penis, fever, swollen scrotum, or pain around the bladder, or groin
- female at birth – pain when urinating, red, itchy, or irritated genitals, mucus coming out of the vagina, fever, chills, vomiting, pain in the belly, pain with sex or unusual menstrual bleeding

Testing



Picture 1 Preparing for a swab test.

After your antibiotic treatment (next page), your provider may recommend testing for trichomonas. Testing may include a **urine sample** or **vaginal swab**, depending on your symptoms (Picture 1).

Treatment: metronidazole

Metronidazole is an antibiotic medicine. It kills the parasite that causes the infection.

- Your prescription can be filled at any pharmacy.
- You can take this medicine 1 hour before eating **or** 2 hours after eating. If it upsets your stomach, you can take it with food.
- If you vomit the medicine within 1 hour after taking it, call the provider that wrote the prescription. You may need another dose.
- Wait for **1 week** after you and your partner(s) are treated before having sex. During the first 7 days, you can still spread the infection.
- People can have more than one infection at the same time. Metronidazole will not cure other infections.
- **DO NOT TAKE IT if:**
 - Think you might be pregnant or you are breastfeeding. Talk with your health care provider before taking this medicine.
 - You have a serious long-term illness, such as kidney, heart, or liver disease.
 - You are taking any of the following medicines:
 - rifampin
 - phenytoin (Dilantin[®])
 - warfarin (Coumadin[®])
 - lithium
 - phenobarbital
 - disulfiram (within two weeks)
 - You have allergic symptoms to metronidazole, like:
 - hives
 - shortness of breath
 - itching
 - swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat

Common metronidazole side effects

- taste of metal in the mouth
- upset stomach, nausea, or vomiting

Preventing future infection

Abstinence (not having sex) is the best way to avoid other STIs and HIV. If you do have sex, these things can help prevent the spread of STIs:

- Limit your number of sexual partners. Know your partner(s) and their sexual history.
- **Use a condom** every time you have sex, the whole time you have sex.

- Have an extra condom with you in case the one you are using breaks.
- You need to get tested for other STIs and HIV. Having trichomonas can increase your risk of these other infections.

When to call the health care provider

Call your provider if you have any of these symptoms:

- skin rash
- nausea or vomiting
- dark colored urine
- fatigue
- pain during sex
- swollen or tingling hands or feet

When to call 911

Call 911 for emergency help if you have signs of an **allergic reaction** to metronidazole, like:

- shortness of breath
- swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat

Follow-up

- You and your partner(s) **must** be treated and have a follow-up health care visit if the symptoms do not go away.
- Come back for ALL follow-up appointments.
- Get re-tested in 3 months. People who are infected with chlamydia once are more likely to get it again.

More information

If you have any questions, call the Adolescent Medicine Clinic at (614) 722-2450. You can also call the National STD Hotline at 1 (800) 232-4636, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m., Monday through Friday, or you can get information at <http://www.ashastd.org>.