

TRICHOMONIASIS



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

Trichomoniasis is a parasitic infection that affects both sexes, but is more common in women. Trichomoniasis is a sexually transmitted disease (STD).

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Women:
 - Discomfort varies greatly from woman to woman and from time to time in the same woman.
 - Foul-smelling, frothy vaginal discharge that is most apparent several days after a menstrual period.
 - Vaginal itching and pain.
 - Pain with intercourse.
 - Redness of the vaginal lips (labia) and vulva.
 - Painful and frequent urination.
- Men:
 - Infected men usually have no symptoms.
 - Rarely may have painful urination and a pale white discharge from the penis.

CAUSES

Infection from a tiny parasite, *Trichomonas vaginalis*. The infection is spread from person to person during sexual intercourse. Symptoms may start 5 to 28 days after being exposed. The parasite may also live in the body for years without producing symptoms. Since it thrives in both men and women, both sexual partners must receive treatment.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Having multiple sexual partners.
- Having sex with someone who has, or had, multiple sexual partners.
- Engaging in unsafe sex.
- On very rare occasions, the infection can be spread by sharing moist towels, washcloths or even from Jacuzzis and hot baths.

PREVENTIVE MEASURE

- Use latex (rubber) condoms during sexual intercourse.
- Limit your sexual partners or practice abstinence. The more sex partners you have, the greater your risk of any sexual transmitted disease.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Can be cured with treatment.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

If the infection is untreated, it can lead to other problems. Women may be more at risk for HIV infection (if exposed). If pregnant, it may cause early delivery and low birth weight baby. In men, prostate, bladder or urethra problems may occur.



DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Your health care provider will do a physical exam and a pelvic exam in women. Medical tests may include Pap smear, and studies of vaginal discharge and urine. Tests to check for other STDs are often done.
- Treatment is with a drug. Your sexual partner(s) must be treated at the same time. This will prevent you from getting reinfected.
- Don't douche unless prescribed for you.
- Wear cotton underpants or pantyhose with a cotton crotch.
- Take showers instead of tub baths.
- If urinating causes burning, urinate through a tubular device, such as a toilet-paper roll or plastic cup with the bottom cut out. Pour a cup of warm water over the genital area while you urinate.
- Don't sit around in wet clothing, especially in a wet bathing suit.
- To learn more: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) National STD Hotline (800) 227-8922; website: www.cdc.gov/std.

MEDICATION

Metronidazole (Flagyl) taken for 1-14 days is usually prescribed for you and your sexual partner. Follow directions carefully. Don't drink alcohol when you take this drug. If combined, they interact and cause a reaction with nausea, vomiting, sweating, weakness and other symptoms.

ACTIVITY

Avoid too much exercise, heat, and excessive sweating. Avoid sex until treatment is complete. Allow about 10 days for recovery.

DIET

No special diet.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has symptoms of trichomoniasis.
- Symptoms get worse despite treatment.
- Unusual vaginal bleeding or swelling develops.

Special notes:

More notes on the back of this page