

Trichomoniasis Fact Sheet

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SOURCES:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- ❖ [Trichomoniasis Fact Sheet](#)
- ❖ [2010 STD Treatment Guidelines](#)

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

- ❖ [Trichomoniasis Information](#)



What is trichomoniasis?

Trichomoniasis is a common sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by an infection with the parasite *Trichomonas vaginalis*.

How common is trichomoniasis?

Trichomoniasis is very common, especially among sexually active young women. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 3.7 million *T. vaginalis* infections occur among men and women in the U.S. each year, but only 30% tend to develop symptoms related to trichomoniasis.

How do people acquire *Trichomoniasis vaginalis*?

People get *Trichomoniasis vaginalis* through skin-to-skin genital contact and vaginal sex with a partner with the infection. Women can get the infection from male or female partners who have *T. vaginalis* while men typically only get the infection from female partners.



What are the symptoms?

People without symptoms of trichomoniasis can still pass *T. vaginalis* to others. Symptoms of trichomoniasis are more common in women than in men.

Most (but not all) women will experience symptoms of trichomoniasis that include:

- ❖ Odor or discharge from the vagina
- ❖ Painful urination
- ❖ Discomfort during sex

Most men infected with *T. vaginalis* don't have symptoms of trichomoniasis, although some may have irritation or pain in the penis, mild or watery discharge, and discomfort after urination or ejaculation.

Symptoms often begin within 5 to 28 days after a woman is infected with *T. vaginalis*.



Testing/Diagnosis

For both men and women, a healthcare provider must perform a physical examination and laboratory test for *T. vaginalis* to diagnose trichomoniasis.

Trichomoniasis is much harder to detect in men than in women because some men who are infected with *T. vaginalis* might not have symptoms. Regardless, male sex partners of female patients diagnosed with trichomoniasis should be presumptively treated.





What is the treatment for trichomoniasis?

Trichomoniasis is cured with one dose of oral (by mouth) antibiotics. Sex partners must also be treated, or re-infection can occur. Do not have sex until all partners have finished the medication.



What are the complications of trichomoniasis?

Trichomoniasis can cause babies to be born prematurely (early) or with low birth weight. If you think you may be pregnant, be sure to tell your health care provider to discuss treatment options. Women can be treated with a single antibiotic dose at any stage of pregnancy.

Research suggests that having trichomoniasis increases the risk for acquiring HIV infection in women known to be HIV-negative. In women who are HIV-positive, trichomoniasis can facilitate HIV transmission to others.



Reduce your risk

There are several things that can lower the risk of trichomoniasis:

- ❖ Use a condom or another latex barrier (such as a dental dam) for each sex act (oral, anal, and vaginal). A barrier should be put on before any sexual contact takes place.
- ❖ Have sex with only one uninfected partner (who only has sex with you).
- ❖ Seek appropriate STD testing and treatment. Talk with your healthcare provider about which tests might be recommended for you.



Talk to your partner

It can be hard to tell a partner that you have trichomoniasis, but keep in mind that your partner can have it and not know. Tell all recent sex partners so they can receive treatment.

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