

Trichomonas Infection

- Trichomonas is a sexually transmitted vaginal infection.
- It is caused by a parasite that can remain in the genital and urinary tract of men and women for a long time without causing symptoms
- There are over 5 million new cases of trichomonas diagnosed yearly in the United States.
- When trichomonas is diagnosed, it is impossible to know how long the infection has been present.
- k It is possible to diagnose trichomonas very long after a person was infected.

What are the signs and symptoms of trichomonas infection?

- Women have a range of symptoms from absent or no symptoms to obvious vaginal discharge with odor.
- The discharge is usually described as discolored or frothy
- There may be vaginal or vulvar irritation or redness
- Lower abdominal discomfort may occur
- The vagina, urethra, glands near the urethra and bladder may be affected.
- Most men will never have symptoms from trichomonas

What do I do if I think I may have trichomonas?

- See your health care practitioner for evaluation.
- k The pH level may be checked and will be abnormally elevated
- The practitioner may make slides to examine the discharge under the microscope.
- Even when trichomonas infection is present, the organism may not be seen under the microscope.
- k A culture may be sent to the laboratory if the diagnosis is in doubt.
- No diagnostic test is 100% accurate
- If trichomonas is described on a Pap test it may not always be that trichomonas infection is definitely present

What is the treatment for trichomonas?

- The infection is treated with an antibiotic pill called metronidazole or tinidazole.
- The Center for Disease Control recommends that the medication is taken as a single dose, all at once or twice a day for seven days.
- y Alcohol should be avoided for a few days after taking the medication to prevent flushing or nausea.
- It is recommended that when trichomonas is diagnosed, there should be testing for other STD's

What follow-up is needed?

- W** There is no recommendation for follow-up unless there are persistent or returning symptoms.
- If you have symptoms after treatment, you should contact your health care practitioner.

Does my partner need treatment?

- W** The Center for Disease Control recommends that partners of women diagnosed with trichomonas should be treated.
- It is important to know that men generally do not have symptoms from trichomonas
- They should be treated to prevent transmission and re-infection of partners.
- y If a woman is diagnosed with trichomonas, her partner should be treated without the need for testing.
- y Avoid sex until both partners are treated.