

# Trichomoniasis

## GET YOURSELF TESTED

Testing is confidential. If you are under 18 years old, you can be checked and treated for STIs without parental consent.

### What about my partner(s)?

Trichomoniasis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). Because of this, your sex partners should be checked and treated, if needed, even if they do not have symptoms.

### Can I get trichomoniasis again?

Yes. You can get this STI again. Having it once does not mean you are immune. As soon as you get trich you can spread it until you take the right medicine and the infection is gone. You will be at risk for trich again if your partners do not take medicine and get rid of this STI before you have sex with them. This includes oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

### How can I prevent trichomoniasis?

Use latex or polyurethane condoms every time you have oral, anal, or vaginal sex. This will lower your chances of giving or getting this STI. But, using condoms will not totally stop your risk. This is because condoms are not 100% effective. Condoms do help prevent the spread of other STIs including HIV.

Not having sex (abstinence) is the only sure way to avoid infection.

Do not have sex if you think you have trich or you have been exposed. Visit a health care provider for a checkup. If you are sexually active, you and your partners should get a full physical checkup. This includes a complete sexual history and testing for common STIs. You should be checked for gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, herpes, genital warts, trichomoniasis, and HIV.

### Will anyone know the results of the exams?

Your test results and any treatment will be kept absolutely confidential. No one can find out your results, except you. If you are under 18 you can be checked and treated for STIs without getting permission from your parents.

### To learn more

If you have more questions about Trichomoniasis, or to find a clinic near you, call your local health department or family planning program.

You can also find a testing center near you at <https://gettested.cdc.gov> or 1-800-541-2437.

(trick-oh-moe-nye-uh-sis)



Department  
of Health

# trick-oh-moe-nye-uh-sis



Trichomoniasis  
can be cured  
with antibiotics.

Over  
**3 million**  
people  
get trichomoniasis  
each year.

A pregnant woman  
with trich may have an  
early delivery and  
the baby may have  
a low birth weight.



## What is trichomoniasis?

Trichomoniasis (also called trich) is the number one cause of vaginal infections spread through sex. Each year, an estimated 3.7 million people have this sexually transmitted infection (STI). Most men with trich do not have symptoms so they do not get treated. That's why it's common for men to re-infect their partners. This STI can cause problems during pregnancy.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

The most common symptom is fluid from the vagina or the urethra (opening in the penis). This fluid is called a discharge. About 70% of people with trich do not have any signs or symptoms.

Vaginal symptoms may include:

- a yellowish-green or gray, foamy discharge;
- a musty odor;
- redness or itchiness, or both; or,
- pain during sex, or when urinating.

Penile symptoms may include:

- Occasional pain when urinating and/or a discharge from the penis. This is called urethritis.

## How will I know if I have trichomoniasis?

To know for sure you should visit a health care provider. It is not possible to diagnose trichomoniasis based on symptoms alone. Your health care provider can examine you and get a laboratory test to diagnose trichomoniasis.

## What causes trichomoniasis?

Trich is caused by a tiny parasite called *Trichomonas vaginalis*. It lives in moist, dark parts of the body. You can get this STI by having sex without a condom with someone who is infected. This includes oral, vaginal, and anal sex.

## Can this STI cause any other problems if it's not treated?

Yes. A woman with untreated trich has a greater chance of having an infected uterus and Fallopian tubes. This infection is called pelvic inflammatory disease or PID. If you have Pelvic Inflammatory Disease it can cause belly pain, fever, and perhaps the inability to have children (infertility), a pregnancy outside the uterus (ectopic pregnancy), and chronic pelvic pain. It's rare, but it is possible to die from an ectopic pregnancy.

If you have trich when you are pregnant, you and your baby may have some health problems. You may have an early (premature) delivery and your baby may have a low birth weight.

Trichomoniasis can increase the risk of getting or spreading other STIs. For example, trichomoniasis can cause genital inflammation that makes it easier to get infected with HIV, or to pass HIV to a sex partner.

## Is there a cure?

Yes. Your health care provider will give you medicine to help you get better. It is very important to take the medicine as directed. **Do not drink alcohol** while on the medicine, and for at least 3 days after finishing or you may become very sick. Make sure to finish all of your medicine, even if you start to feel better and have no more symptoms.

## When can I have sex again?

It is best to wait one week after you and your partner(s) have finished your medicine before you have oral, vaginal, or anal sex again. If you finish your medicine and you still have symptoms, return to your provider. Remember: You can get trich again if your sex partners are not also treated.

TRICH