Trichomoniasis

WHAT IS TRICHOMONIASIS?

Trichomoniasis (Trich) is the most common, curable, sexually transmitted infection (STI). Although this infection affects both women and men, symptoms are more common in women.

7.4 million new cases of trich occur in both women and men each year in the United States.

HOW DO PEOPLE GET TRICHOMONIASIS?

A single-celled protozoan parasite called Trichomonas vaginalis is sexually transmitted through penis to vagina intercourse or vulva to vulva contact with an infected partner. Women can acquire the disease from partners of both sexes, but men typically only contract it from infected women.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

In men:
- Irritation inside the penis
- Mild discharge
- Slight burning after urination or ejaculation
- However, most men experience no symptoms.

In women:
- Discharge that is frothy and green, yellow, or gray in color
- Strong odor
- Itching or irritation in or around the vagina
- Pain or discomfort during sexual intercourse or urination.

Symptoms usually appear in women within 28 days of exposure.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT IF I HAVE IT?

A healthcare provider must examine you and take a urine or vaginal fluid sample. If you are concerned that you may have Trichomoniasis, make an appointment to see your care provider as soon as possible.

- Avoid scheduling the exam during your monthly period.
- Don’t douche or use vaginal spray 24 hours prior to the exam.
- Use condoms if you have sex within 24 hours of your exam.

HOW IS TRICHOMONIASIS TREATED?

Trich can usually be cured with prescription medication.

Remember:
- You must finish all medicine prescribed to you.
- Sexual partners must be treated or you will get trich again.
- Do not have sex until all partners have finished their medication and have no symptoms.

An infected man, even a man who has never had symptoms or whose symptoms have stopped, can continue to infect or reinfect a female partner until he has been treated.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM NOT TREATED?

The genital inflammation caused by trich can increase a woman’s susceptibility to HIV infection if she is exposed to the virus. Having trich may increase the chance that an HIV-infected woman passes HIV to her sex partners.

CAN IT AFFECT MY PREGNANCY?

Pregnant women with trich may have babies who are born early or with low birth weight. Women in the first three months of pregnancy should not take medicine for trich because it might hurt the baby. Medicine can be taken after the first three months. If you think you may be pregnant be sure to tell your healthcare provider.

HOW CAN TRICH BE PREVENTED?

The surest way to avoid transmission of sexually transmitted diseases is to abstain from sexual contact or to be in a long-term, mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who has been tested and is known to be uninfected.

Latex male condoms, when uses consistently and correctly, can reduce the risk of transmission.

Learn how you can protect your health at: www.adagiohealth.org