

Trichomoniasis

This is an infection of the genital tract in both men and women, caused by a parasite called *Trichomonas vaginalis*.

In women, symptoms of trichomoniasis may include:

- > frothy yellow/green vaginal discharge which may have a foul odour
- > pain or discomfort during sexual intercourse
- > pain or discomfort when passing urine
- > low abdominal discomfort
- > there may be no symptoms.

In men, most infections are without symptoms, but some men have:

- > pain or discomfort when passing urine
- > epididymitis (inflammation of the storage tubes for sperm that are on top of the testes).

Diagnosis is made by microscopic examination or culture of discharge from the vagina or penis.

Trichomoniasis is spread by sexual contact. Re-infection appears to be common.

Having trichomoniasis is associated with increased risk of transmission of HIV infection if exposure occurs.

Incubation period

(time between becoming infected and developing symptoms)

4 – 28 days, average 7 days, but symptoms may not develop.

Infectious period

(time during which an infected person may infect others)

The duration of the infection, which may last for years. People with infections but who have no symptoms are still able to transmit the infection to others.

Treatment

Treatment may be a single oral dose of an antibiotic, or may require a longer course of treatment. Pregnant women may be advised to use pessaries (tablets inserted into the vagina), as the oral drug is best avoided, if possible, during pregnancy.

Control of spread

- > No sex, or use condoms, until completion of treatment.
- > Practise safer sex – use condoms or dental dams.
- > Partners need to be contacted, tested and treated. Even if partners have no symptoms, they may cause re-infection.
- > Testing to exclude other sexually transmitted diseases is advisable.

- > **Avoiding Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)**

Useful website

- > **Clinic 275**
<http://www.stdservices.on.net/std/>