
Trich

Trichomoniasis

Trich is short for Trichomoniasis. This common STD is caused by tiny parasites called protozoa. They live in the wet areas of the genitals of infected people, such as the urethra in men and the vagina in women. Trich is passed from one person to another during sex.

There is no lasting damage from trich, but women may have babies that are premature or too small to be healthy. In men, it can irritate the prostate gland. Having trich can make it easier to get other STDs, including HIV. Trich should be treated immediately.

Signs and symptoms

Trich causes inflammation in the vagina in women and in the urethra in men. People don't always have symptoms. If there are symptoms, they usually appear 5–28 days after contact with an infected partner. But the symptoms can also appear 6 months or even years later.

In women, the key sign is a foamy, yellow-green discharge that has an unpleasant odor. There can also be itching and irritation in the vagina. Pain while urinating or while having sex is another sign. There may also be low belly pain. However, half of the women who have trich show no signs at all.

Most men who are infected have no symptoms, but they can still infect their sex partners. For men who notice signs, there may be a thin, clear, or white discharge from the penis or pain while urinating. Men with urethritis can be tested for trich if other STDs are not found.

Testing

A swab is used to take fluid from the vagina or penis. The doctor then looks for protozoa under a microscope. Because this test does not work all the time, a culture is better, but it takes longer and is more expensive.

In women, trich is sometimes found during a Pap test. In men, the semen can be checked for trich.

Treatment

A drug called metronidazole or Flagyl is used. You must not drink alcohol during treatment because it will cause vomiting. Pregnant women cannot take this drug during the first three months of pregnancy.

It is important not to have sex until all partners are cured. Some people may have to be treated more than once. All partners must be treated even if there are no signs. If they are not treated at the same time, you can get trich again.

Prevention

- **Know your sex partners** go with them for STD tests.
- **Use condoms correctly every time you have sex.**
- **Have fewer sex partners.** The more partners you have, the greater your chances of getting trich.
- **Birth control pills do not prevent infection.**

Learn more about trich

If you have questions or need more information, contact your doctor, local health department, or community clinic, or call the National STD Hotline at **1-800-227-8922**.

For persons with disabilities this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TTY/TDD 1-800-833-6388).



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