

The top of the page features a microscopic image of several Trichomonas vaginalis parasites. These are pear-shaped organisms with multiple long, wavy flagella extending from one end. The background is a soft-focus mix of pink, purple, and blue hues. A dark blue horizontal banner is overlaid on the top left of the image, containing the text 'SEXUAL HEALTH TESTING' and the main title 'Trichomoniasis Information Sheet' in white.

SEXUAL HEALTH TESTING

Trichomoniasis Information Sheet

What is Trichomoniasis?

Trichomoniasis is a common sexually transmitted disease (STD) that is spread through sexual contact with the penis or vagina of an infected individual.

Trichomoniasis is caused by infection with a protozoan parasite called *Trichomonas vaginalis*.

Symptoms of Trichomoniasis

Most individuals infected with trichomoniasis remain asymptomatic, with only approximately 30% of infected individuals showing symptoms (1). However, asymptomatic individuals can still pass the infection on to any sexual partners. The severity and onset of symptoms can vary significantly, ranging from just mild irritation to severe inflammation, which may occur 5 to 28 days post-exposure or much later, or symptoms may disappear then reappear (1).

Symptomatic males may experience itching or irritation inside the penis, painful burning after urination or ejaculation, increased urination, and abnormal penis discharge (2).

Symptoms in females include itching and irritation of the vagina, painful and more frequent urination, endocervical bleeding, and abnormal vaginal discharge (1,2).

Trichomoniasis infections can cause discomfort during sexual intercourse, and are associated with an increased risk of contracting other STDs, including an increased risk of HIV (1,3).

Trichomoniasis during pregnancy increases the risk of premature rupture of membranes, preterm delivery, and low birth weight (3), and is associated with an increased risk of the transmission of HIV from an HIV-positive mother to her child (4).

Trichomoniasis Information Sheet

Who is at risk of trichomoniasis?

Any sexually active individual is at risk of trichomoniasis. There are estimated to be 3.7 million infected individuals in the United States (2), with higher rates among females aged 14-59 years (2.1%) compared to males (0.5%) (3).

How is trichomoniasis diagnosed?

Modern nucleic acid amplification testing (NAAT) provides the most sensitivity and specificity for a trichomoniasis diagnosis. These can be performed on vaginal swabs (either clinician- or patient-collected) or urine.

How is trichomoniasis treated?

Prescription antibiotics are an effective treatment for trichomoniasis. However, reinfection is common through sexual contact with an infected partner; hence treatment of all sexual partners should occur at the same time. Abstaining from sexual contact for 7 to 10 days after the completion of the antibiotic course and all symptoms have ceased is important to prevent passing the infection to any sexual partners. Retesting is recommended for all sexually active females within three months of treatment (3).

How do I reduce my risk?

Abstaining from vaginal, anal, or oral sex is the only way to completely avoid sexually transmitted diseases, such as trichomoniasis. Condom use reduces, but does not eliminate, the risk of trichomoniasis (5). Douching is not recommended as it can increase the risk of vaginal infections, including trichomoniasis (6).

References:

- (1) Trichomoniasis Fact Sheet. CDC. [Online] February 2020.
- (2) Satterwhite CL, et al. (2013). Sexually transmitted infections among US women and men: Prevalence and incidence estimates, 2008. *Sex Transm Dis*, 40 (3), 187-193.
- (3) 2015 Sexually Transmitted Diseases Treatment Guidelines, Trichomoniasis. CDC. [Online] June 4, 2015.
- (4) Gumbo FZ, et al. (2010) Risk factors of HIV vertical transmission in a cohort of women under a PMTCT program at three peri-urban clinics in a resource-poor setting. *J Perinatol*, 67 (2), 717-723.
- (5) Crosby R, et al. (2012) Condom Effectiveness against Non-Viral Sexually Transmitted Infections: A Prospective Study Using Electronic Daily Diaries. *Sex Transm Infect*, 88 (7), 484-489.
- (6) Tsai CS, Shepherd BE & Vermund SH. (2009) Does Douching Increase Risk for Sexually Transmitted Infections? A Prospective Study in High-Risk Adolescents. *Am J Obstet Gynecol*, 200 (1), 38.e1-e8.e8.

Where can I find more info?

Visit www.genetrackdiagnostics.com for full test information, including specimen collection requirements

CONTACT US:

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NOTE:

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