

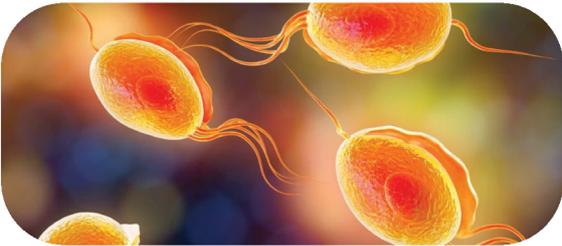
Trichomonas

What is trichomonas?

Trichomonas is a genital infection caused by the organism trichomonas vaginalis. While it is common worldwide, it is rare in urban areas in Australia. Trichomonas is a vaginal infection, more common in older populations and those living in remote areas. It rarely causes symptoms in the penis.

How do you catch trichomonas?

Trichomonas is a sexually transmissible infection (STI) that is passed on during sex without a condom with a person who has trichomonas.



How do you test for trichomonas?

If you have a vagina:

- If you have trichomonas symptoms, or you have a partner who has been diagnosed with it, then the doctor or nurse will examine you and take a swab taken from your vagina.

If you have a penis:

- If you have symptoms (such as a discharge from the penis), the doctor or nurse will take a swab from the end of your penis
- If you have no discharge, then a urine sample will be collected

If your partner has been diagnosed with trichomonas you will need testing and treatment even if you have no symptoms.

Trichomonas is not routinely tested for, particularly in areas where it is uncommon.

How is it treated?

Antibiotics are used to treat trichomonas. These are given as 4 tablets in a single dose, or a longer course over a week. The antibiotics used to treat trichomonas must be taken with food. They can cause nausea, tiredness, and a metallic taste in your mouth.

You must not drink alcohol when taking or for 24 hours after completing the medication course. They can cause nausea, vomiting, and headache if taken with alcohol.

If you are diagnosed with trichomonas during pregnancy, your treatment options may need to be discussed with a specialist.

It is essential to avoid any unprotected sexual intercourse for 7 days after treatment has finished to allow the treatment to work, and to avoid becoming reinfected, or infecting others. You may also need re-testing four weeks later if your symptoms continue.

What are the symptoms?

Vaginal symptoms

About 50% of the time, trichomonas does not cause any vulval or vaginal symptoms.

If symptoms do occur, they include:

- An unpleasant vaginal odour
- A yellow, green, or grey discharge, which is usually frothy
- Itching, burning, and discomfort of the vagina, the vulva, or both

Symptoms of the penis/urethra

Trichomonas very rarely causes any symptoms of the penis/urethra.

If symptoms do occur, they include:

- Discomfort with passing urine
- Abnormal discharge from the penis

Are there any complications if trichomonas is not treated?

If it is not treated, trichomonas infection during pregnancy can cause premature delivery and low birth weight in the baby.

Can trichomonas come back after I have had treatment?

You can be reinfected with trichomonas. To avoid this:

- Do not have any sexual contact until 7 days after you started your treatment, even sex with a condom
- Do not have any sexual contact with any sexual partners until 7 days after they have started their treatment
- Use condoms every time you have sex



Do I need to tell my sexual partners?

Yes, you need to inform all recent sexual partners. They will need to be tested and treated, even if they have no symptoms. Your doctor or nurse can assist you with this.

There is a website called Let Them Know, which has samples of how you might talk to someone, as well as emails and text messages you can send personally or anonymously. letthemknow.org.au



How can I avoid catching trichomonas?

Using condoms every time you have sexual intercourse is the best way to prevent trichomoniasis and other STIs.

Should I get tested for other sexually transmissible infections?

Yes, if you are diagnosed with an STI such as trichomonas, it is important to be checked for other STIs such as chlamydia and gonorrhoea

Where to go for further information & testing

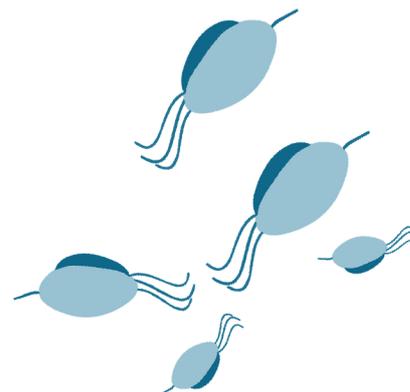
SHFPACT Clinic
02 6247 3077
shfpact.org.au

Canberra Sexual Health Centre at the Canberra Hospital
02 5124 2184
health.act.gov.au/services/sexual-health

Your GP or local Health Centre

SHFPACT Clinical Services

- Contraceptive advice, information and services
- Long acting contraceptive options like IUDs
- Cervical Screening
- Canberra Menopause Centre
- Pelvic Pain Clinic
- Pregnancy Options Counselling
- Sexually Transmissible Infection (STI) Blood Borne Virus (BBV) testing, treating and information
- Emergency Contraception
- Breast checks and breast awareness education
- Fertility issues and pre-conception advice
- Sexual difficulties and sexuality education
- PrEP information, advice and prescription



References: Victorian Sexual Health Network,
Australia STI Management Guidelines Family Planning Australia

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