

# TRICHOMONIASIS

Trichomoniasis (a.k.a. trich) is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a parasite called *Trichomonas vaginalis*. It's very common—more common than chlamydia and gonorrhea combined.

Trich is spread through sexual contact with an infected partner—this includes penis-to-vagina intercourse or genital-to-genital contact.

Women can get the infection from sexual contact with either men or women. Men are typically infected only through sexual contact with women.

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## Symptoms of Trich

Only about 30 percent of people that have trich have any symptoms. Women are more likely than men to have symptoms.

Women with trich might experience:

- vaginal discharge that is green, yellow or grey
- A bad vaginal smell
- Itching in or around the vagina
- Pain during sex
- Pain when urinating

Most men don't have symptoms. If they do these could include:

- itching or irritation inside the penis
- a discharge for the penis
- pain when urinating.

Some people with symptoms of trich get them within 5 to 28 days after being infected, but others don't develop symptoms until much later.

## OVERVIEW

- Trichomoniasis (trick-oh-moan-ai-uh-sis), also called trich (pronounced “trick”) is a sexually transmitted infection.
- Trich is very common—more than 2.5 million people in the U.S. get trich each year.
- Anyone who is sexually active can get trich.
- Trich is easy to cure with antibiotics.

Symptoms can come and go, and without treatment, the infection can last for months or even years.

## How Trich Can Impact Your Health

Even if a person has no symptoms of trich, the infection can cause other problems. Trich can cause genital inflammation that makes it easier to become infected with HIV or to pass HIV on to a sex partner.

In pregnant people, trich can cause a baby to be born early or have low birth weight. If you have trich and think you may be pregnant, or plan to get pregnant, be sure to let your healthcare provider know.

## Getting Tested

Anyone having symptoms of trich, including an unusual discharge, genital itching or irritation, or pain when urinating should get tested.

A healthcare provider may use a swab to take a sample of cells from the vagina or penis to be tested for the parasite that causes trich. Trich can also be diagnosed with a urine test.

Since the symptoms of trich are similar to those of other STIs, your healthcare provider may want to test you for other STIs as well, like chlamydia and/or gonorrhea.

## Treatment

Trich is easy to cure, with just one dose of antibiotics. If you are being treated for trich, keep these facts in mind:

- Use all the medicine prescribed, even if your symptoms go away.
- Sex partners must also be treated, or you will get trich again.
- Do not have sex until all partners have finished the medication.

## Telling Your partner

It's very important to discuss trich with any recent sex partner(s) because most people who have trich don't know they have it.

*You might say, "I went to the doctor and found out I have trich, a sexually transmitted infection. Since we had sex, you might have it too. You need to get tested. If you have it, you just have to take one pill and it will be gone."*

If you don't want to tell your partner(s) yourself, most public health clinics will do it for you without giving your name.

## Staying Healthy

You can protect yourself from trich in the same ways you protect yourself from other STIs.

- Talk to your partner about safer sex and how you can protect yourselves against STIs.
- Have condoms on hand, and be ready to use them. Use a condom when you have vaginal, anal and oral sex, or any genital-to-genital or genital-to-anal contact.
- Get tested—and bring your partner with you to get tested too.
- If you have any symptoms of an STI or have a sexual partner that was diagnosed, go to your healthcare provider or clinic as soon as possible. YesMeansTest.org has a clinic finder if you need help locating a provider.

## Learn More

Learn more about trich and other STIs from the American Sexual Health Association, a trusted nonprofit organization that has advocated on behalf of those at risk for STIs for more than a century. Our websites include:

[www.ashasexualhealth.org](http://www.ashasexualhealth.org)

[www.iwannaknow.org](http://www.iwannaknow.org)

[www.quierosaber.org](http://www.quierosaber.org)

[www.nccc-online.org](http://www.nccc-online.org)

[www.askexpertsnow.com](http://www.askexpertsnow.com)

[www.YESmeansTEST.org](http://www.YESmeansTEST.org)

