

Your partner has Trichomoniasis (“Trich”): What you need to know

DIRECTIONS & INFORMATION FOR PARTNERS OF PERSONS DIAGNOSED WITH TRICHOMONIASIS (“TRICH”)

What is trichomoniasis?

Trichomoniasis (also known as “Trich”) is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in the United States. Trichomoniasis is caused by a parasite that is easily spread by **any kind** of sexual contact, including oral, vaginal, and/or anal sex with someone who already has trich. For this reason, it is appropriate to assume you also share this infection and can be offered treatment without first going to the doctor.

What are the symptoms of trichomoniasis?

Unfortunately, it is **very common for people to not have any symptoms** (also called being “asymptomatic”) of trich. Because it is possible that someone can be infected with trich and not know it and pass it on to other people, it is important to get tested for STIs, including trich at least yearly if you are having sex and when you have new partner(s).

What happens if trichomoniasis is not treated?

Trich **can lead to serious health problems if not treated**, even if the person with trich does not have symptoms. Some of the possible health issues that may happen if trich is not treated are:

- A more serious infection in people with female body parts (like a uterus, ovaries, and/or fallopian tubes) called Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) that may lead to inability to get pregnant (“infertility”), complications in future pregnancies such as a pregnancy outside of the womb (“ectopic pregnancy”), and/or long-term issues with pain.
- Pregnant people with trich may give birth to their babies earlier than they should (“preterm”) and the babies may have health issues including low weight, some disabilities, and/or their own trich infection.
- Untreated infection increases your risk of getting or giving HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

How do I take my medicine to treat trichomoniasis?

Most people will be given an antibiotic called metronidazole. Your treatment may be different than someone else. People with female body parts should take the metronidazole two times a day for 7 days because it may be more effective than just one dose. People with male body parts can be treated with just one dose or the two times a day for 7 days treatment. Take your metronidazole with food if you can. People who cannot have metronidazole might get tinidazole instead. **Do not share your antibiotic with anyone else. You need to take all the medication given to you for it to be effective and get rid of all the infection.**

What happens if I have a side effect to the medication?

Antibiotics (metronidazole or tinidazole) used to treat trich are very safe. Stomach upset, diarrhea, headache, metal-like taste, and nausea are common side effects of these antibiotics, and it is normal for people who take them to get these symptoms. They are not serious and should go away once you finish your antibiotics. These side effects are not an antibiotic allergy.

Allergic reactions are extremely rare. If you think you may have had an allergy to an antibiotic in the past, ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking the medication. Even if you had an allergy to one antibiotic in the past, you still may be able to take the antibiotic prescribed to you this time. **If at any time you develop difficulty breathing, swelling of your face or neck, hives (a bumpy, itchy rash), or watery diarrhea bad enough that you can't leave the house, go to the nearest emergency department.**

What should I do next?

- **Do not engage in any kind of sex for 7 days AFTER FINISHING your medicine – it takes the medication that long to fully treat the infection, so you do not pass it on to other people or deal with more severe medical issues.**
- Tell all the people who you have had sex with in the last 2 months (or your last partner) that you are being treated for trich so they can be tested and treated, too.
- People who are infected with trich are very likely to get it again – it is a good idea to get tested for trich and other STIs in about 3 months.
- Because many people with trich may not know they are infected because they do not have symptoms, it is important for you to get tested for STIs on a regular basis (about every 6-12 months) and when you have new sex partner(s).
- Using condoms and having sex with partner(s) who practice safer sex and get regularly tested will reduce your chances of getting trich again.
- **IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS: contact a medical professional (like a doctor or pharmacist), call the Minnesota Family Planning and STD Hotline at 1-800-783-2287, and/or visit a sexual health clinic like Red Door Clinic (612-543-5555) or Clinic 555 (651-266-1255).**
- **If you have more partners that you feel would benefit from treatment, have them call the Minnesota Family Planning and STD Hotline at 1-800-783-2287, and/or visit a sexual health clinic like Red Door Clinic (612-543-5555) or Clinic 555 (651-266-1255).**

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