

What is Trichomoniasis?

- Trichomoniasis, or trich, is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a one-cell parasite called *Trichomonas vaginalis*
 - It is more common in females, where it usually infects the vagina, cervix, urethra, bladder, and glands in the genital area
- About 20% of sexually active females will develop trich
- In males, it infects the urethra or under the foreskin
- Untreated trich can lead to complications such as pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and infertility
 - Trich during pregnancy increases the risk of preterm delivery

What are the symptoms of Trichomoniasis?

- Trich often does not have any symptoms
- Females may notice excess vaginal discharge that can be yellow, grey-green, and/or foamy
 - Discharge may have a fishy odour
 - Vaginal itching and irritation can occur, as well as pain during sexual intercourse
- Males rarely have symptoms of trich infection, but may experience abnormal discharge from the penis or a burning feeling after urination
- Symptoms usually appear a week after infection, but it can take up to a month for symptoms to appear.

How is Trichomoniasis diagnosed?

- Trich is diagnosed by a physical examination and lab tests
- In females, a physician may obtain a swab of vaginal discharge to be tested for trich
- Sometimes, the trich parasite can be identified by a routine Pap test
- Trich is detected in males by urine test or urethral swab.

How is Trichomoniasis treated?

- Trich is usually treated with metronidazole, an antiprotozoal medicine that kills the trich parasite
- Your sex partner(s) should also be treated to reduce the chance of reinfection
- Avoid sex during treatment and at least 1 week after treatment
- Some strains of trich may be resistant to antiprotozoal medicines and require an increased dose of metronidazole
- To prevent trich, practice safer sex by limiting your sex partners, knowing whether your partner engages in risky sexual behaviours, and use a barrier contraception method (like condoms) during sex.

References:

- Government of Alberta. *Trichomoniasis*. 2021. [Cited 2022 Feb 4]. Available from: <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/Pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=hw139874>
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- Government of Alberta. *Alberta Treatment Guidelines for Sexually Transmitted Diseases*. 2018. [Cited 2022 Feb 4]. Available from: <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/93a97f17-5210-487d-a9ae-a074c66ad678/resource/bc78159b-9cc4-454e-8dcd-cc85e0fcc435/download/sti-treatment-guidelines-alberta-2018.pdf>