



Trichomoniasis

Trichomoniasis ('Trich') is a genital infection caused by the organism *Trichomonas vaginalis*. It is mainly detected in women and is rarely diagnosed in men.

In South Australia, trichomoniasis is a relatively unusual condition. It is found more often in Aboriginal women or women who have recently had sex outside Australia.

Symptoms

The symptoms of trichomoniasis vary widely.

In women, infection may produce a discharge from the vagina which may be yellow-green in colour and foul smelling. Itching and burning may also be present.

Many women are infected without symptoms.

Men usually do not have symptoms and act as carriers of the infection.

However in some cases men may experience a discharge from the penis and discomfort when passing urine.

Transmission

The infection is caught by having sexual intercourse with an infected person.

Non-sexual transmission is thought to be rare. However, there is evidence that *Trichomonas vaginalis* can survive for short periods on toilet seats and in bath water.

Occasionally, trichomoniasis may recur after the initial infection has been treated.

Diagnosis

To diagnose trichomoniasis, a doctor must perform a vaginal examination and take a swab from the vagina.

The doctor then smears the swab on to a slide which is examined in the laboratory under a microscope.

At Clinic 275, if *Trichomonas vaginalis* is present, it can be diagnosed 'on the spot'.

The organism is difficult to isolate from men and diagnosis can therefore be uncertain. If there is a discharge from the penis, a swab can be sent to the laboratory for microscopic examination. Otherwise, a specimen of urine is collected.

Treatment

Treatment is with antibiotic tablets, either tinidazole (Fasigyn) which is taken a single large dose, or metronidazole (Flagyl) which is taken for 5 days. Topical creams are not recommended.

Notes on metronidazole and tinidazole

Do not take tinidazole if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Metronidazole or tinidazole may cause nausea or an upset stomach. You can reduce these side effects by taking the tablets after meals.

Avoid alcohol during treatment and for 3 days afterwards, or a severe hangover may result.

Some people experience an unpleasant taste in the mouth when taking metronidazole. This disappears soon after the treatment is completed.



Trichomoniasis

Sexually Transmitted Diseases Services

Royal Adelaide Hospital

Free and confidential advice, testing and treatment for all STDs including HIV/AIDS

No appointment necessary

Monday, Thursday & Friday

10am – 4.30pm

Tuesday & Wednesday

12 noon – 7pm

1st floor
275 North Terrace
Adelaide 5000

Telephone

08 8226 6025

Toll free country call
1800 806 490

email

std.services@dhs.sa.gov.au

web site

www.stdservices.on.net

CLINIC

Follow-up

After treatment, you should return to the clinic in one week for another test. Do not have sex until this test demonstrates that the condition has been cured.

Regular sexual partners should also be tested and treated to prevent reinfection. Do not have intercourse until a week after both of you have been treated.

More information

STD Services web site:
www.stdservices.on.net/std/trichomoniasis

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