**The Facts About Trichomoniasis**

**What is trichomoniasis?**

Trichomoniasis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by the protozoal parasite, *Trichomonas vaginalis*.

**How common is trichomoniasis?**

It is the most common non-viral sexually transmitted infection in the US with more than 180 million cases worldwide.2 Both men and women can get a trichomoniasis infection, but it is more commonly detected in women. 2.3 million women with the infection are between ages 14 and 49.(4) Older women are more likely than younger women to be infected1 and African American women are more likely to be infected than white or Hispanic women.4

**How is trichomoniasis spread?**

Trichomoniasis is mostly spread through sexual contact (penis to vagina or vulva to vulva).

**Does trichomoniasis cause symptoms?**

About 70% of people with trichomoniasis do not recognize or report symptoms.1 One-third of asymptomatic women become symptomatic within 6 months.7

**What are the symptoms of trichomoniasis?**

Symptoms in women can include vaginal discharge, genital inflammation, and painful urination. Some infected males experience development of infection in the urethra or under the foreskin of an uncircumcised penis.8 Possible symptoms in males can include itching and irritation, burning after urination or ejaculation, and penile discharge.

**Are there any available treatments for trichomoniasis?**

Trichomoniasis can be treated with oral medications, often with only one dose. However, many people never seek treatment because they do not experience any symptoms of the infection.

Without treatment, a trichomoniasis infection can last for months or years, and it is impossible to diagnose a Trichomonas infection based on symptoms alone.9 Even with treatment, reinfection can occur. About 1 and 5 people get infected again within 3 months after treatment.10 Recent findings have also revealed treatment failures due to drug resistance.11

**What complications can result from trichomoniasis?**

Long term Trichomoniasis complications are most notable in pregnant women and when the spread of HIV is involved.

If a mother has trichomoniasis during pregnancy, the infection can be passed to the baby during childbirth. The baby is at risk for low birth weight and premature birth. (2, 12)

**Trichomoniasis Continued…**

Trichomoniasis complications can result in Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID), affecting the female reproductive organs. Untreated PID is the most common reason for female infertility and can lead to serious, often irreversible damage to the female reproductive system.14

Trichomoniasis also increases a person's chances of acquiring HIV (see below.)

**Does trichomoniasis affect the spread of HIV?**

Yes. Like many other STIs, trichomoniasis can increase the risk of getting HIV from an infected sexual partner by approximately two-fold.15 Trichomoniasis enlarges the portal of entry for HIV, allowing direct viral access to the bloodstream through open lesions.15

Women with trichomoniasis have about 50% greater risk for acquiring HIV than a woman without trichomoniasis.16

**Can trichomoniasis be prevented?**

Yes; refraining from sexual activity until a person is in a lifelong, mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner can prevent the sexual transmission of trichomoniasis.

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