

Your Guide to

Trichomoniasis

Simple facts on identifying symptoms, treatment, and prevention.



What is it?

Trichomoniasis (often called "trich") is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a tiny parasite called *Trichomonas vaginalis*. It is common in Aotearoa New Zealand and is easily treated.

How do you get it?

Trichomoniasis is usually spread through sex or contact with infected genital fluids.

You can get trichomoniasis from:

- Genital contact without a condom
- Sharing sex toys that have not been cleaned between uses or covered with a new condom.

Symptoms

Many people do not have symptoms and may not know they have trichomoniasis, but they can still pass it on.

Symptoms are more common in people with a vagina.

For people with a vagina, symptoms **may** include:

- Increased vaginal discharge
- A strong or unpleasant genital smell
- Itchy, sore, or irritated genitals.

For people with a penis, most people have no symptoms, but some **may** have:

- Discharge from the penis
- Pain or discomfort when peeing.

How do you get tested?

Testing is simple.

- If you have a vagina, a vaginal swab is usually used, and you can often do this yourself.
- If you have a penis, a urine sample is usually taken.

If you have symptoms, a doctor or nurse may also recommend an examination to check for other possible causes.

Treatment

Trichomoniasis is **usually easily treated with antibiotics**.

The antibiotics usually work very well. Taking the tablets with food can help reduce nausea. Avoid alcohol during treatment and for 48 hours afterwards, as it can make you feel very unwell.

It is important to:

- Take all the medication exactly as prescribed
- Avoid unprotected sex, including oral sex, for 1 week from the start of treatment and until 1 week after current sexual partner/s have been treated.

Prevention

You can reduce your risk of getting or passing trichomoniasis on by:

- Using condoms or dental dams from start to finish every time you have vaginal sex
- Not sharing sex toys, or cleaning them between uses and covering them with a new condom each time
- Having regular STI checks, especially if you have new or multiple partners.

If you have been treated for trichomoniasis:

- Make sure your current sexual partner or partners are tested and treated
- Avoid sex, or use condoms, until everyone has been treated as advised
- Get retested 3 months later to check for reinfection.



Telling your partners

If you are diagnosed with trichomoniasis, it is important to tell anyone you have had sex with in the last 3 months. Partner notification helps prevent reinfection and reduces transmission. Partners should be tested and treated.

Telling partners is important to stop the infection being passed on and to reduce the risk of you getting it again. Your doctor, nurse, or sexual health clinic can help you with this if needed.

Where can I get help?

Attend your local sexual health clinic or primary care provider.

For more information on all things sexual health and STIs, visit the Just the Facts website: justthefacts.co.nz.





Code **HE7032**.

June 2026.

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