

## Vaginitis Fact Sheet

**Bacterial Vaginosis (BV)** is a common, treatable condition that results from an imbalance of “good” and “harmful” bacteria. BV is the most common vaginal condition in women. Anything that causes a change in the acidity (pH balance of the vagina) such as semen, blood, douching, tight or moist clothes, soaps, or perfumes can trigger an overgrowth of BV. Symptoms of BV include a thin, white, or gray vaginal discharge; vaginal pain, itching, or burning; a strong, fish-like odor, especially after sex; and burning with urinating. Sometimes people with BV do not have symptoms.

**Candidiasis** (also known as “Yeast Infection”) is a common infection caused by a fungus called Candida. Pregnancy, hormones, medications (such as antibiotics), diabetes, or changes in the immune system increase your risk of getting Candidiasis. Symptoms of a Yeast Infection include vaginal itching or soreness; pain during sex; pain when urinating; and clumped vaginal discharge. Candidiasis is often mild, but some women develop severe infections involving redness, swelling, and cracks in the wall of the vagina.

**Trichomoniasis Vaginalis** (also known as Trich) is a common, treatable, sexually transmitted infection caused by Trichomonas (a protozoan parasite). During sex, Trich spreads from a penis to a vagina, from a vagina to a penis, or from a vagina to another vagina. Trich can be prevented by being in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with a partner (who has been tested and does not have Trich) or by using condoms. Many people who have Trich do not have symptoms. Men with Trich may notice penile burning, itching, irritation, and discharge. Women with Trich may notice itching, burning, redness, or soreness of the genitals; discomfort during peeing or with intercourse; and clear, white, yellow, or green vaginal discharge with a fishy smell.

**Mycoplasma Genitalium** (also known as MGen) is a common, treatable, sexually transmitted infection caused by a bacterium. Symptoms of MGen include vaginal or penile discharge, a burning sensation, or irritation. MGen can infect the cervix, the penis, or the rectum. If left untreated it can cause serious health problems such as pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and increase your risk of an ectopic pregnancy. For people who are already pregnant, Mgen may be associated with preterm delivery or pregnancy loss.

### Vaginitis Testing and Treatment

If an infection is suspected or confirmed, your provider will send medication to your pharmacy. It is important to take your medication as prescribed, even if your symptoms go away. You may need to revisit your provider if your infection is severe, does not get better, or keeps coming back after getting better. Vaginitis can increase the risk of getting or spreading other sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia and gonorrhea. Even after completing treatment for an infection, you can still get it again. If the infection is sexually transmitted, your sex partner(s) should receive treatment at the same time. You should not have sex again until you and your partner(s) complete treatment. You should receive testing again about three months after your treatment. For people with recurrent infections, taking a probiotic that promotes the growth of healthy vaginal bacteria can help prevent reinfection.