



TRICHOMONIASIS:

A Guide for Partners Who Received EPT



Why am I getting medicine or a prescription?

- » Your sex partner has been diagnosed with trichomoniasis (trick-oh-moh-NY-ah-siss), or “trich”. You may have “trich” too. It is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). STIs are spread through oral, vaginal, or anal sex. The good news is, once you are treated, you won’t spread “trich” to others.
- » “Trich” is easy to treat (cure) by taking a medicine called metronidazole (met-roh-NY-dah-zol) or Flagyl (FLAH-jul). Metronidazole is very safe.
- » Your sex partner was treated. You need to be treated, too. That’s why a health care provider gave your partner medicine or a prescription for you. Getting treated this way, without seeing a health care provider, is called Expedited Partner Therapy or EPT.

What do I need to know about “trich”?

- » Most people with “trich” don’t have symptoms (signs of infections). You may have “trich” and not know it but can pass it on to others.
- » If you do have symptoms, you may have itching or irritation in the genital area, a burning feeling when you urinate (pee), a discharge (drip) from the penis, or yellow-green discharge from the vagina.

Why should I take the medicine?

- » If you don’t get treated, you may develop serious, even life-long health problems. And, having an untreated STI, like trich, can make it easier to get HIV.
- » If you don’t get treated, you may not be able to get pregnant.
- » If you’re pregnant and have untreated trich, it can cause you to have your baby too early (preterm delivery) and can cause your baby to have a low birth weight.

If you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant

- » Metronidazole is safe to take during pregnancy. But, even after you take the medicine, you should see a health care provider right away. That way, you can get tested and treated for other STI’s, to make sure you get the best care for you and your baby.

I’ll take the medicine. But should I see a health care provider?

- » Seeing a health care provider is best. But, if you cannot see a health care provider in the next few days, take the EPT medicine or fill the prescription your partner has given you.
- » Even if you take the medicine, see a health care provider as soon as possible to get tested for “trich” and other STIs, too. You may have more than one STI at the same time. This medicine will not cure other STIs.



Reasons not to take the medicine and see a health care provider instead.

Metronidazole is a safe medicine. But, do not take it if you:

- Have lower belly pain
- Have pain during sex
- Are vomiting
- Have a rash or fever
- Have pain or swelling in the testicles (balls)
- Have had a rash, breathing problems, or allergic reaction to metronidazole or other medicines.
- Have a serious long-term illness, such as kidney, heart, or liver disease
- Take other prescription medicines

If any of these are true for you, see a health care provider **as soon as possible**. Your health care provider will find the best medicine for you.



HOW TO TAKE THE MEDICINE

- » It is best to take this medicine with food to prevent an upset stomach.
- » If you throw up in the hour after taking your medicine, you need to get more medicine. In this case, it's best to visit a healthcare provider as soon as possible.
- » After finishing your medicine, wait at least 7 days after you and your partners have finished the medicine before having sex. If you do have sex, use a condom or dental dam (for oral sex) so you don't get infected again.
- » Be sure to finish all the pills. Do not share or give your medicine to anyone else.

Side Effects

» Most people have no side effects (feel sick) from metronidazole. Some people may get diarrhea, a slightly upset stomach, dizziness, or a taste of metal in the mouth. These side effects are not usually serious.

Allergic reactions

IF YOU HAVE SIGNS OF AN ALLERGIC REACTION, call 911 or go to the Emergency Room immediately. These include: trouble breathing, throat tightness, swelling of your lips or tongue, or hives (very itchy skin bumps or welts).

The Maryland Department of Health wants to learn about any serious problems you may have had with the medicine. If you think you had an allergic reaction, contact: **410-767-6700**.

If you are a man who has sex with men

» You should get tested for trich and other STIs, too. Since you may have trich, you also may have syphilis and/or HIV and not know it. It is very important that you see a healthcare provider and get tested for STIs.



Avoid STIs in the Future

- » The only way to completely avoid STIs, including HIV, is not to have sex. If you do have sex, do it safely. **Use a condom every time for every kind of sex – anal, vaginal, or oral sex. You can also use a dental dam for oral sex:** <https://www.cdc.gov/condom-use/communication-resources/index.html>.
- » You can lower your chances of getting STIs, including HIV, by talking to your partners about getting tested and treated.

For low-cost or free STI/HIV testing and treatment services:

- Find your local health department at health.maryland.gov/sexualhealth
- Go to gettested.cdc.gov
- Call **800-232-4636 / TTY: 888-232-6348**