

Patient Information about Bacterial Vaginosis

<http://www.urologychannel.com/patient-information-std/bacterial-vaginosis.shtml>

Bacterial vaginosis (BV) is a common vaginal infection that is caused by bacteria and may be transmitted sexually. This vaginal infection usually affects young women of childbearing age, may develop during pregnancy, and often is mistaken for a yeast infection.

Signs and symptoms of BV include vaginal odor, vaginal itching, and vaginal irritation. This vaginal infection is diagnosed through a pelvic exam and laboratory tests to detect bacteria associated with vaginosis. Antibiotics are used to treat bacterial vaginosis and reduce the risk for pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), infertility, and pregnancy complications (e.g., ectopic pregnancy, premature birth, low birth weight).

Here are some questions to ask your doctor (e.g., gynecologist) about bacterial vaginosis. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like answered, and bring it to your doctor's appointment. Information about STDs can help reduce the risk for spreading these infections and help prevent complications.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about BV

- Why do you think I have bacterial vaginosis and not a vaginal yeast infection?
- Am I at increased risk for BV because of my pregnancy or birth control method, or because of any medications I am taking, such as antibiotics?
- Do you suspect that this infection is associated with—or unrelated to—sexual activity?
- What kinds of tests will be performed to determine which bacteria are causing my vaginal infection? What do these tests involve?
- Should my sexual partner be tested and/or treated? Why or why not?
- What types of complications are associated with BV and what are the signs and symptoms of these complications?
- Am I at increased risk for complications caused by this infection? Why or why not?
- What should I do if my condition worsens or I develop any complications?
Telephone number to call:
- What type of treatment do you recommend? Why do you recommend this treatment?
- Is this medication administered orally or topically?

- What are the benefits, risks, and side effects associated with this medicine?
- What should I do if my symptoms do not improve or I experience severe side effects?
Telephone number to call:
- How long might it take for this treatment to work?
- If this medication is ineffective, what other treatments are available?
- What are the long-term risks associated with bacterial vaginosis?
- How can I help maintain normal vaginal pH levels to reduce my risk for developing BV in the future?
- What other steps can I take to lower my risk for sexually transmitted infections?

Notes/Additional Information