

Bacterial Vaginosis

Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) is one of the most common vaginal infections. It occurs when the normal balance of bacteria in the vagina is disrupted.

Signs and Symptoms

- *Some women do not have symptoms.*
- Unpleasant vaginal odor
- Abnormal discharge from the vagina, usually a white or gray color

What is BV?

- BV occurs when there is a disturbance in the normal balance of bacteria in the vagina. Why this happens is not known. You are more likely to get BV if you:
 - Have a new sex partner or multiple sex partners
 - Do not use condoms with vaginal sex
 - Douche

Prevention

- Abstain from vaginal sex.
- Use condoms or barriers consistently and correctly during vaginal sex.
- Limit number of sex partners.
- Do not douche.

Treatment

- See a health care provider for an exam and tests to figure out diagnosis and best treatment.
- Treatment is medicines (antibiotics) prescribed by a health care provider.
- Male partners do not need to be treated.
- BV often comes back after treatment. Consistent condom use may decrease how often BV comes back.

If Not Treated

- Continued symptoms
- May increase risk for getting HIV and other STDs
- During pregnancy:
 - Premature delivery
- Increased risk of getting PID after a surgery such as a hysterectomy or an abortion

If You Have BV

- Seek medical care, including STD tests.
- Take all medicines prescribed, even after your symptoms go away.
- Limit number of sex partners and use condoms correctly to prevent BV from coming back.

For more information about STDs or for getting tested and treated, visit our web site...

www.kingcounty.gov/health/std

Public Health
Seattle & King County

