

Bacterial Vaginosis (BV)

Bacterial Vaginosis is the result of overgrowth of one of the several organisms normally present in your vagina. The acidic balance of the vagina can be altered by your menstrual period, pregnancy, diabetes, some antibiotics, birth control pills, and steroids. Sexual activity and irritation of the vagina also seem to encourage the “bad” bacteria to grow.

Symptoms of Bacterial Vaginosis Include:

- Thin, grayish-white discharge.
- Pain, itching, burning, or redness around the vagina.
- There may be pain with sexual intercourse or burning with urination.
- Swelling of the Vulva.
- Fishy odor, especially after intercourse.

Risk Factors for Bacterial Vaginosis Infections Include:

- A new or multiple sexual partners.
- Douching.
- Not using a condom.
- Perfumed bath soaps, tampons/pads.
- Frequent use of thongs; damp tight-fitting clothing.
- Using IUD for birth control.

Treatment:

- Tablets or vaginal gel for 5-7 days.

Basic recommendations to prevent BV:

- Do not wear tight-fitting or synthetic-fiber clothing.
- Wear cotton underwear - no thongs.
- Wipe from front to back after using the toilet.
- Do not douche or use feminine hygiene sprays.
- Avoid deodorant tampons/pads, or bubble baths, and avoid using colored or perfumed toilet tissue.
- Limit the number of sexual partners.
- Finish the entire course of treatment for BV, even if symptoms resolve after a few doses. Return to your health care provider if symptoms reoccur.
- Use of condoms is advised for male partners of women with recurrent BV.

Sources and/or additional resources:

Web MD: <http://www.webmd.com/sexual-conditions/tc/bacterial-vaginosis-topic-overview>

Family Doctor.org: <http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/women/reproductive/vaginal/234.html>

UpToDate.com: http://www.uptodate.com/contents/bacterial-vaginosis?source=search_result&search=BV&selectedTitle=1-71#PATIENT_INFORMATION

If you are a registered Millersville University student and you have questions or you need to make an appointment, please call Millersville University Health Services at 871-5250.