

Prevention

- * Wash your genital area with unscented or antibacterial soap and water. Avoid feminine hygiene products. Do not douche, unless prescribed by a health professional.
- * Wear cotton underwear and panty hose with a cotton crotch.
- * Use a water soluble jelly, such as K-Y jelly, as a lubricant. Do not use an oil based lubricant, such as vaseline.
- * Wipe from the front to the back when using the restroom.
- * Avoid large amounts of sugar and soda pop.
- * Eat yogurt at least three times a week.
- * Use condoms during sexual intercourse. Avoid contact with a partner that may show symptoms of an infection.
- * Men should keep the area clean under the foreskin if uncircumcized.
- * Know the signs and symptoms of bacterial vaginosis. If you think you have symptoms, then get checked by a health professional.



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Bacterial Vaginosis (BV)



GENESEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

www.gchd.us

"Better Life Through Better Health"
(810) 257-3612

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What is BV?

- * Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) is a mild type of vaginal infection that is caused by a bacteria. BV used to be called Hemophilus, Gardnerella or nonspecific vaginitis. These terms are now outdated because there are other types of germs that could cause BV.
- * BV may cause babies to be born early or with low birth weight. It can also cause infections in the mother's womb or fallopian tubes. If you think you might be pregnant, talk with your health care provider.

What Causes BV ?

- * The bacteria that cause BV are normally found in the vagina. When these bacteria grow and multiply to above normal numbers, then the infection causes problems.
- * BV is an infection women can get whether or not they are sexually active. Rarely does it occur in women who have never been sexually active.
- * Because BV is vaginal infection, it does not occur in men.

Symptoms

- * **WOMEN:**
 - * A creamy, gray-white or yellowish discharge from the vagina.
 - * A bad odor from the discharge develops. It smells "fishy" or is "sharp and ammonia-like."
 - * The vagina may burn or itch, especially after having sex.
 - * The symptoms may be very mild with little irritation.
- * **MEN:**
 - * Male partners of women with BV are not usually treated unless a female sex partner has repeated infections.

Bacterial Vaginosis can be chronic in women and hard to treat. Women often have repeated infections, even after treatment.

Diagnosis

- * Diagnosis is based on the symptoms described and what is seen during an exam.
- * During an exam, the health care provider may see the gray-white or yellowish discharge. The distinct odor of the discharge will often be noted.
- * A sample of the discharge may be examined under a microscope to look for bacteria.

Treatment

- * BV is treated with an antibiotic. All the medicine should be taken as prescribed. Do not share with a partner. Partners need to be checked by a doctor and given their own medicine, if needed.
- * Men usually are not treated, unless his partner has repeated infections. Men should wash the penis and under the foreskin. Using condoms for at least two weeks during treatment seems to help symptoms in women to go away.