

# BACTERIAL VAGINOSIS

## What is bacterial vaginosis?

Bacterial vaginosis, also known as BV, is a common condition where there is an overgrowth of bacteria in the vagina.

## How do you get bacterial vaginosis?

Any woman can get BV when there is an abnormal balance of bacteria of the vagina. This balance can be upset by having a new sex partner, multiple sex partners, or by douching.

## What are the symptoms and possible complications of BV?

Women with BV may have an abnormal discharge with a fish-like odor, especially after intercourse. Some women have no symptoms at all. BV can increase a woman's chance of getting HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea, or herpes simplex if exposed. Having BV while pregnant may increase the risk of complications of pregnancy including the possibility of a preterm delivery.

## What is the treatment for BV?

BV is treatable with antibiotics. Treatment for pregnant women is especially important.

## How can BV be prevented?

The following basic steps can help to reduce the risk of upsetting the natural balance of bacteria in the vagina-

- Be abstinent
- Limit the number of sexual partners
- Do not douche
- Use all the medication prescribed for BV even if the symptoms go away