

Title: Bacterial Vaginosis and Pregnancy

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Abstract:

Bacterial vaginosis (BV) is a vaginal infection that occurs when there is a disruption in the balance of the bacteria that normally lives in the vagina. There is an overgrowth of certain bacteria which can lead to symptoms such as discharge and odor. This pamphlet will discuss BV and BV during pregnancy.

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# Bacterial Vaginosis and Pregnancy

## OTHER TREATMENTS FOR BV?

Does eating YOGURT help prevent bacterial vaginosis?

There are no good studies to show that this is true. It is thought that yogurt with live bacteria in it can help the normal bacteria that live in the vagina to grow.

Can GARLIC help with BV?

Garlic appears to have some natural killing abilities against bacteria and fungi. More tests need to be done.

Does TEA TREE OIL treat BV?

Tea tree oil also seems to have killing abilities against bacteria, but there are no good tests that show that this works.

For more information:

Centers for Disease  
Control and  
Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

American Social  
Health Association  
[www.ashastd.org](http://www.ashastd.org)

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## BACTERIAL VAGINOSIS

Bacterial vaginosis (BV) is an infection of the vagina. The normal bacteria that live in the vagina are disturbed by the overgrowth of a certain bacteria.

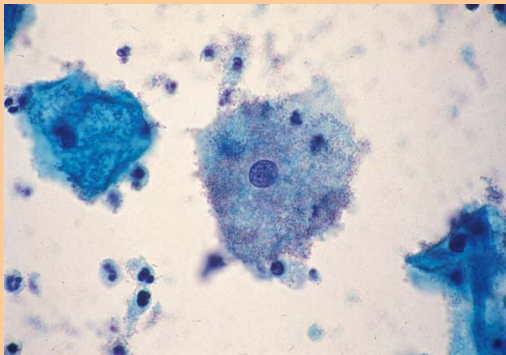
BV is the most common vaginal infection. It is not necessarily a sexually transmitted infection. Some studies show that when you have BV, you are likely to have other sexually transmitted infections.

**SYMPTOMS** usually include:

- Thin, gray-white vaginal discharge
- Unpleasant fishy vaginal odor, or
- Often there can be no symptoms

Sometimes, symptoms may include

- Itching
- Pain/burning during urination



## DIAGNOSIS

A diagnosis of BV is made with a vaginal exam by a doctor. Samples of fluid are sent for testing.

## TREATMENT

BV can be treated with antibiotics. Commonly used are antibiotics called metronidazole and clindamycin. These can be taken by mouth as pills or placed as a gel in the vagina.

BV can come back even after treatment.

## BV PREVENTION

Not everything is known about BV, but it is related to having a new sex partner or having many sex partners.

Keep a healthy balance of the normal bacteria that live in the vagina by:

- Limiting the number of sex partners
- Not having sex
- Avoid douching (washing the vagina with water or other fluids)
- Taking the medications for BV as told by your doctor



## BV AND PREGNANCY

BV is common in pregnant women. Pregnant women with BV may have:

- babies who are born early (premature)
- babies with low birth weights,
- infection of the fluid around the baby (amniotic fluid),
- infection of the uterus after delivery of the baby

A pregnant woman **does not** have to be tested for BV. If you do have BV, but **no** symptoms, treatment usually is not needed. You often get better on your own.

But, if you have the symptoms of BV, you will be tested for BV and other vaginal infections.

Pregnant women with BV can be treated with antibiotics.

Please see your doctor with any questions or concerns.

