

Bacterial Vaginosis

What is it?

Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) is caused by a change in the balance of normal bacteria in the vagina.

How do I know if I have it?

You could have discoloured, smelly discharge from your vagina. Often there are no symptoms.

How could I get it?

It is not sexually transmitted. You cannot give it to someone or catch it.

How can I make sure I don't get it?

Currently we cannot tell you what to do to avoid getting BV. We advise using condoms as a general principle. However, while condoms may help in avoiding BV, they are not completely protective.

How do I test for it?

A doctor or nurse will use a long cotton bud to collect some vaginal fluid. The sample is sent to a laboratory for testing.

How can I get rid of it?

Bacterial vaginosis is treated with antibiotics or by applying a cream. Take all of the tablets to make sure it goes away.

Treatment is not recommended if you do not have any symptoms. You should talk with a doctor about your treatment.

If you are pregnant, talk with your doctor as if you have symptoms you should get tested.

This fact sheet is just some general information. If you are worried about your health go and see a doctor

Where can I get more information and support?

For more information on STIs and safe sex visit the Play Safe website:

www.playsafe.health.nsw.gov.au

Sexual Health Info Link is a service that you can call up for information on STIs and sexual health. It's anonymous and non-judgemental. Call: **1800 451 624** or visit <https://www.shil.nsw.gov.au/>

"Let them know" allows you to send an anonymous messages to tell someone you've had sex with that they have come into contact with the infection: <http://www.letthemknow.org.au/>