

Bacterial Vaginosis

What is bacterial vaginosis (BV)?

BV is a common cause of vaginal symptoms. BV is not a sexually transmissible infection. It occurs when there is overgrowth or change in the balance of bacteria which are normally found in the healthy vagina.

How do I know if I have BV?

Symptoms of BV may include:

- an increase in vaginal discharge
- an unpleasant odour
- irritation to the genital area
- BV is diagnosed by testing the vaginal discharge.

What is the treatment for BV?

BV may be treated with oral antibiotics or a vaginal cream if symptoms persist.

Do sexual partners need treatment?

Sexual partners do not require treatment.

What else should I know?

- Factors associated with an increased risk of BV include:
 - vaginal douching or washing
 - IUCD (intrauterine contraceptive device) as a form of contraception
 - being sexually active
 - Having multiple sexual partners
 - having a new sexual partner
 - some types of sexual activity between women
 - lack of condom use
 - smoking
 - being from certain ethnic backgrounds
- Avoid all vaginal products including deodorants, perfumes, soaps, and bath salts. Avoid douching and other products such as tea tree oil, vinegar or alcohols and disinfectants to the genital area.
- Most women with BV do not experience complications. In pregnancy, BV has been associated with some complications. Please seek further advice from your GP or Midwife if you have BV and are pregnant.

Screening for STIs

All sexually active people should consider regular testing for sexually transmissible infections.

Gold Coast Sexual Health Service offers express STI screening that is available without an appointment providing you:

- do not have symptoms
- have not been in contact with a sexually transmissible infection.

If you have symptoms, or have been in contact with an STI, contact Gold Coast Sexual Health Service for an appointment.

Check our website at: <https://www.goldcoast.health.qld.gov.au/our-services/sexual-health> for times and locations



Interpreter services

Gold Coast Health provides interpreter services for patients who are from non-English speaking backgrounds. If you require the assistance of an interpreter, please indicate this on your registration form and advise Gold Coast Health prior to your appointment.

Interpreter services are provided free of charge to all patients who require the service, including non-Medicare patients.



**For further information or support, please contact:
Sexual health
Southport Health Precinct
16-30 High St, Southport, 4215
Phone: 1300 744 284**