Urethral Trichomonas vaginalis infection and HIV-1 transmission.

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PIP: The authors' previous study of 504 male workers in Mombasa, Kenya, provides further documentation of an association between urethral infection and increased shedding of HIV in semen. In this study, Trichomonas vaginalis was isolated by culture in 30 men (6%) and was the most commonly isolated urethral pathogen. Men with Trichomonas vaginalis were significantly older than those with Neisseriagonorrhoeae, suggesting infection may be of long duration. 83% of men with unmixed infections were asymptomatic. Since guidelines for syndromic management of urethral discharge do not include Trichomonas vaginalis, even symptomatic men with this condition who seek treatment are unlikely to be diagnosed and properly treated. More research is needed to confirm whether Trichomonas vaginalis (especially long-standing, low-grade infection) enhances male to female HIV transmission. Since an effective, single-dose, low-cost treatment for Trichomonas vaginalis is available worldwide, mass treatment strategies for this sexually transmitted disease could play an important part in HIV prevention in developing countries.