

Diagnostic Parasitology

Trichomonas vaginalis

Trichomonas vaginalis is a common cause of vaginitis. The trophozoite (shown at right, Giemsa stain) measures about 15 x 10 μ m. The auxostyle (arrow) is often clearly visible. The trophozoite has a single nucleus and four flagella. The undulating membrane is sometimes visible and extends about halfway down the side.

Trichomonas spp. do not have a cyst stage.



T. vaginalis infections are generally diagnosed by examining wet-mounts of vaginal discharge. It is important to examine these samples soon after collection so that the parasites are still motile. It is easy to confuse nonmotile *T. vaginalis* with WBCs. In the image on the left, the flagella (arrow) are just discernible.

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