

**What is Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS)?**

TSS is caused by a toxin producing bacteria. The illness usually is known for being associated with the use of tampons but also can occur due to the use of diaphragms and vaginal contraceptive sponges or infection following childbirth, abortion and surgery.

Who is at risk for TSS?

Menstruating women who use tampons or other devices are at a high risk of developing TSS. Women who use diaphragms or vaginal contraceptive sponges also are at risk. Men and women with *Staphylococcus aureus* infections are at risk.

What are the symptoms of TSS?

Symptoms of TSS include fever, muscle aches, vomiting and diarrhea. Usually a red rash occurs soon after the onset of symptoms. The skin peels one to two weeks after the onset. Low blood pressure and organ failure can occur in severe cases.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually occur about two days after infection.

How is TSS spread?

TSS is not spread person to person.

When and for how long is a person able to spread the disease?

TSS is not spread person to person.

How is a person diagnosed?

A physician is able to diagnose TSS based on symptoms.

What is the treatment?

Toxic shock syndrome is treated with antibiotics. Supportive treatment also may be needed, such as fluid replacement. Immune globulin intravenous also may be used to treat the infection.

Does past infection make a person immune?

No. Past infection does not make a person immune to future infections.

Should children or others be excluded from day care, school, work or other activities if they have TSS?

No exclusion is necessary; TSS is not spread person to person.

What can be done to prevent the spread of TSS?

Women using tampons, diaphragms and vaginal contraceptive sponges should follow the manufacturer's instructions as to how long to leave the products in place. Women who are menstruating and using tampons need to contact their health-care provider immediately if they develop a high fever with vomiting and diarrhea.

Additional Information:

Additional information is available at www.ndhealth.gov/disease or by calling the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2180.

Resource: American Academy of Pediatrics. Toxic Shock Syndrome. In: Pickering LK, ed. *Red Book: 2003 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*. 26th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2003: 624-630.

