

# TSS and Tampon Use

The link between TSS and tampon use still is not very clear, but some steps can be taken to reduce the risk of contracting TSS.



-Always use the lowest absorbency tampon for the menstrual flow.<sup>1</sup>

-Alternate tampon use with sanitary napkins whenever possible.<sup>1</sup>

-Store tampons in a cool, dry place away from moisture where bacteria are more likely to grow.<sup>2</sup>

-Wash hands thoroughly before and after tampon insertion.<sup>2</sup>

-Change tampons regularly, and never leave one in for more than eight hours.<sup>2</sup>

-Never insert two tampons at the same time.<sup>1</sup>

-Insert a fresh tampon in before bedtime and replace it in the morning.<sup>1</sup>

-Never use a tampon when there is no menstrual flow.<sup>2</sup>

## Common TSS Misconceptions

-TSS is a very common illness.

**\*MYTH!** TSS is extremely rare, with only about 40 cases reported in the US each year!<sup>1</sup>

-Only women can get TSS.

**\*MYTH!** Men, women, and children can get TSS. Tampons are not the only risk factor for TSS!<sup>1</sup>

\*If you contract TSS, you will die.

**\*MYTH!** TSS can be successfully treated when diagnosed early, which is why it is important to be aware of the symptoms!<sup>11</sup>

### References

1. Toxic Shock Syndrome. WebMD Web site. Available at: <http://women.webmd.com/tc/toxic-shock-syndrome-topic-overview>. Accessed March 1, 2008.

2. Center for Disease Control and Prevention Web site. Available at [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/toxicshock\\_t.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/toxicshock_t.htm). Accessed February 21, 2008.

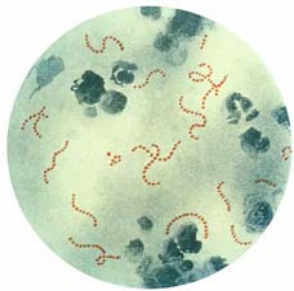
# Toxic Shock Syndrome



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# What is TSS?

Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS) is a type of blood poisoning. It develops after an infection and can spread quickly to other organs. It results from two types of bacteria, *Streptococcus pyogenes* or *Staphylococcus aureus*, that produce toxins which enter the bloodstream and lead to the disease.<sup>1</sup>



# What Causes TSS?

TSS is caused when the normal bacteria that live on the skin or in the vagina, armpit, or nose produce toxins. TSS can be caused from tampon use, a contraceptive sponge, a diaphragm, or surgery incisions that allow the bacteria to enter the body and lead to the disease.<sup>1</sup>

# What symptoms are associated with TSS?

- \*Muscle aches and pains<sup>1</sup>
- \*Sudden fever over 102F<sup>1</sup>
- \*Diarrhea or vomiting<sup>1</sup>
- \*Rapid heartbeat<sup>1</sup>
- \*Sunburn like rash on several areas or just one specific area<sup>2</sup>
- \*Conjunctivitis (pink eye)<sup>1</sup>
- \*Blood infection<sup>2</sup>
- \*Skin tissue shedding<sup>2</sup>



# How is TSS Diagnosed?

TSS develops rather quickly, so there often is not time for a blood test. Doctors usually diagnose TSS based on the symptoms associated with it. Later, blood and tissue tests

will be used to ensure that TSS is the cause of the disease based on the bacteria found at the infection site.<sup>2</sup>

# How is TSS treated?

TSS must be treated immediately because it has an incredibly high fatality rate. Emergency treatment with intravenous fluid and hospital care are required because the body will enter a state of shock. To kill the bacteria that are causing the infection, antibiotics will be administered. When an abscess is present, the doctor will drain it. Steroids may also be used to treat TSS.<sup>1</sup>

# Prevention of TSS

- \*Always wash hands thoroughly<sup>2</sup>
- \*Reduce use of super absorbent tampons<sup>2</sup>
- \*Keep wounds clean and bandages clean<sup>2</sup>
- \*Notify doctor immediately of symptoms<sup>2</sup>