



TOXIC SHOCK SYNDROME (TSS) FACT SHEET

WHAT IS TSS?

Toxic shock syndrome is a complication of certain types of bacterial infections. Often toxic shock syndrome results from toxins produced by *Staphylococcus aureus* (staph) bacteria, but the condition may also be caused by toxins produced by group A streptococcus (strep) bacteria.

HOW DO YOU GET TSS?

- Bacteria can enter the body through cuts or burns on the skin
- Using contraceptive sponges, diaphragms, or superabsorbent tampons

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms typically appear 2 to 5 days after being exposed and may include:

- Fever
- Widespread reddening of the skin
- Rapid-onset hypotension (low blood pressure)
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Muscle aches

TREATMENT

TSS is treated with antibiotics. Discuss treatment options with your doctor.

PREVENTION

- If you use tampons, read the labels and use the lowest absorbency tampon you can. Change tampons frequently, at least every four to eight hours. Alternate using tampons and sanitary napkins, and use minipads when your flow is light.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water to remove any bacteria.
- Take care of wounds appropriately, cleaning and changing dressings often.

DGHD EFFORTS

Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the Delaware General Health District (DGHD). The DGHD investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of disease, and engages in community outreach and education.