

Parasitology



Urogenital Protozoa

Introduction

- In the urogenital tract, is the important pathogen.
- Flagellate, *Trichomonas vaginalis*

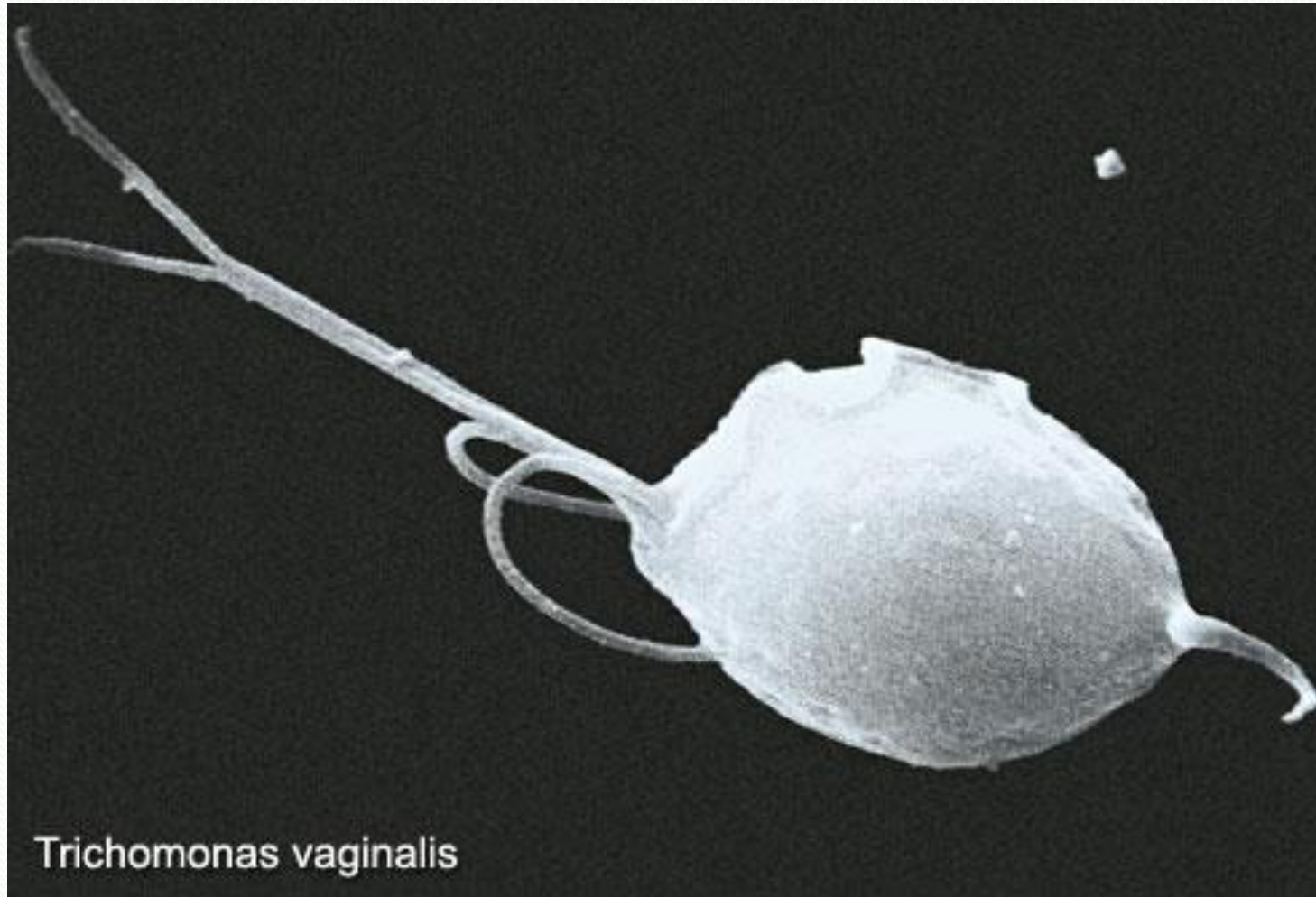
Major Pathogenic Protozoa

Type & Location	Species	Disease
Urogenital tract	<i>Trichomonas vaginalis</i>	Trichomoniasis

FEATURES OF MEDICALLY IMPORTANT PROTOZOA

Organism	Mode of Transmission	Occur in USA	Diagnosis	Treatment
urogenital protozoa				
<i>Trichomonas</i>	Sexual	Yes	Trophozoites in wet mount	Metronidazole

Trichomonas Vaginalis

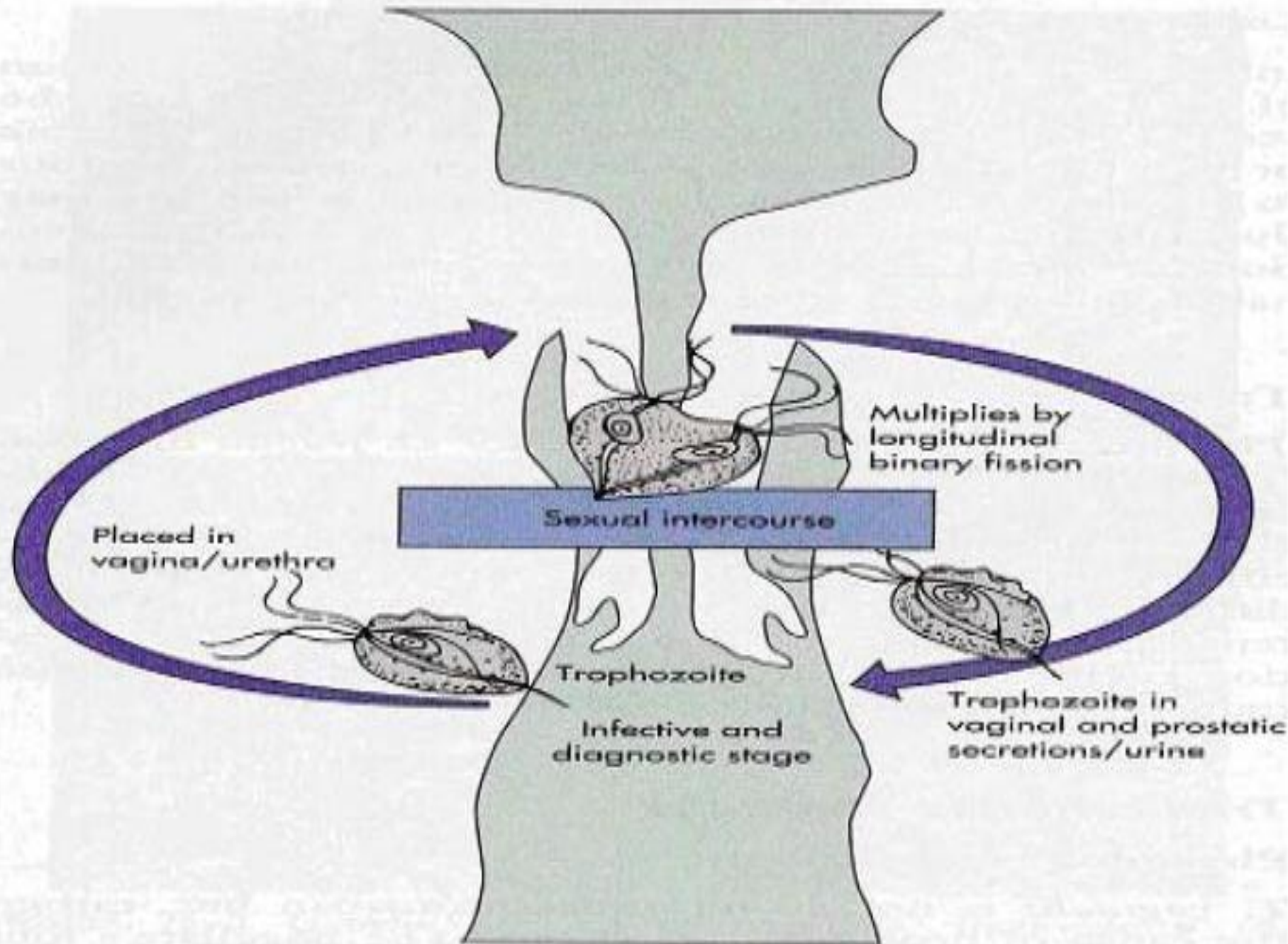


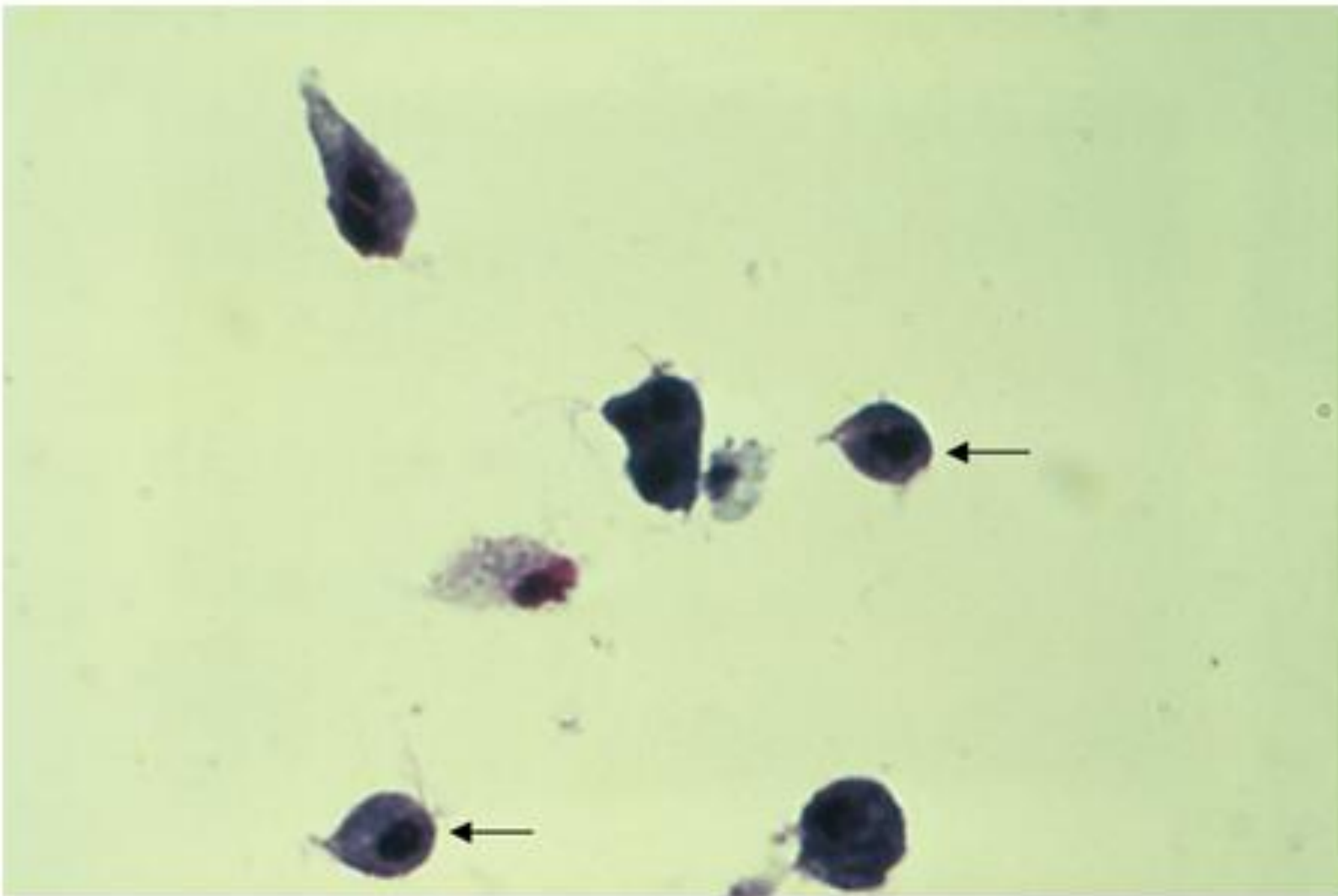
Disease

- *Trichomonas vaginalis* causes trichomoniasis.

Important Properties

- *T. vaginalis* is a pear-shaped organism with a central nucleus & four anterior flagella.
- It has an undulating membrane that extends about two-thirds of its length.
- It exists only as a trophozoite; there is no cyst form.





***Trichomonas vaginalis*—Trophozoite.**
Arrows point to two trophozoites

Pathogenesis

- The organism is transmitted by sexual contact, & hence there is no need for a durable cyst form.
- The primary locations of the organism are the vagina & the prostate.

Epidemiology

- **Trichomoniasis is one of the most common infections worldwide.**
- **Roughly 25% to 50% of women in the USA harbor the organism.**
- **The frequency of symptomatic disease is highest among sexually active women in their thirties & lowest in postmenopausal women.**

Clinical Findings

- In women,
 - a watery, foul-smelling, greenish vaginal discharge
 - accompanied by itching & burning occurs.
- In men,
 - is usually asymptomatic,
 - but about 10% of infected men have urethritis.

Laboratory Diagnosis

- In a wet mount of vaginal (or prostatic) secretions, the pear-shaped trophozoites have a typical jerky motion.
- There is no serologic test.

Treatment & Prevention

- The drug of choice is metronidazole (Flagyl) for both partners to prevent reinfection.
- Maintenance of the low pH of the vagina is helpful.
- Condoms limit transmission.
- No prophylactic drug or vaccine is available.

Scabies and lice

- Scabies and lice, are also common parasitic STIs.
- Each of these infections has a different clinical syndrome. Scabies and lice are examples of parasites that are also commonly transmitted through non-sexual contact.