

Trichomonas hominis

Introduction

This flagellate is of cosmopolitan distribution. It is thought to be non-pathogenic although it has been associated with diarrhoeic stools. It is the most commonly found flagellate next to *Giardia lamblia* and *Dientamoeba fragilis*.

Morphology.

T. hominis has no cystic stage. The trophozoite measures from 5-15µm in length by 7-10µm in width. The shape is pyriform and has an axostyle which runs from the nucleus down the centre of the body and extends from the end of the body and undulating membrane which extends the entire length of the body and projects from the body like a free flagellum. It has 4 free flagella and a single nucleus at the anterior end.

Laboratory Diagnosis

In a fresh stool, the flagellates move very rapidly in a jerky, non-directional manner. The axostyle and undulating membrane are diagnostic. The flagellates are difficult to stain, however, the axostyle can be seen on a stained preparation and is diagnostic.



A trophozoite of *Trichomonas hominis* stained with Giemsa