



GUIDELINES FOR VULVAR SKIN CARE

Laundry

- 1. Use a mild enzyme free soap (such as Woolite Gentle Cycle, All Free and Clear) on any clothing that comes in contact with your vulva, (use 1/3 to 2 the suggested amount per load). Other clothing may be washed in the soap of your choice.
- 2. Do not use fabric softener or dryer sheets on any clothing that comes in contact with your vulva.

Clothing

- 1. Wear white all cotton underpants not nylon with a cotton crotch.
- 2. Avoid pantyhose many manufacturers are marketing thigh-high stockings.(Scantihose 1-800-361-4673)
- 3. Avoid tight clothing and clothing made of synthetic fabrics. Remove wet bathing suits and exercise clothing as soon as you can.

Bathing and Hygiene

- 1. Avoid bath soaps, lotions, gels and other products which contain perfume. No soap is best in the vaginal area. If you must use soap, Aveeno Oatmeal and Neutrogena soaps are recommended.
- 2. Do not scrub vulvar skin with a washcloth. Washing with your hand is enough for a good cleansing.
- 3. Avoid all bubble baths, bath salts and scented oils.
- 4. Pat dry rather than rubbing with a towel. Use a hair dryer on a cool setting when skin is sore or tender.
- 5. Avoid all over-the-counter creams or ointments without asking your health care provider first.
- 6. Avoid douching.
- 7. Soak in lukewarm bath water with 4-5 tablespoons of baking soda to help soothe vulvar itching and burning. Soak 2-3 times a day for 10-15 minutes.
- 8. Avoid the use of deodorized pads and tampons. Tampons should only be used when the flow of blood is enough to soak one tampon in four hours or less. Tampons are safe for most women, but, wearing them too long or when the flow of blood is light may result in vaginal infection, increased discharge or toxic shock syndrome. If pads are irritating, consider using ASeventh Generation. These pads can be found in health food stores or by calling 1-800-456-1177.
- 9. To decrease irritation, small amounts of A&D ointment or Crisco shortening may be applied to the vulva as often as needed to protect the skin. This may also be helpful to decrease skin irritation during your period and after urination.
- 10. Do not shave the vulvar area. Shaving may cause irritation and lead to infection.
- 11. Avoid scented toilet paper.
- 12. Avoid all feminine hygiene sprays, perfumes, adult or baby wipes. Pour lukewarm water over the vulva after urinating if urination causes burning. Pat dry rather than rubbing.
- 13. Larger women may have problems with chronic dampness. Avoid tight clothing and synthetic fabrics.

OVER

14. Dryness during intercourse may be helped by using a lubricant. A small amount of almond oil, which can be obtained at health food stores, is recommended for lubrication. Astroglide, available from the pharmacy, should be used with condoms. A non-latex condom, called Avanti is available and is made of polyurethane.

Birth Control Options

- 1. The new low dose birth control pills do not increase the chances of getting a yeast infection.
- 2. Contraceptive jellies, creams or sponges may cause itching and burning. A brand change may be helpful. Discuss the different brands available with your health care provider.

Smoking

1. Smoking has anti-estrogenic properties. Stopping smoking will contribute to vaginal health.

For more information please visit our website: www.pennstatehershey.org/web/dermatology/home and click on Health Information Library.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your provider at the location you were treated. Hershey Medical Center, UPC I, Suite 100 (717) 531-6820 or Nyes Road, (717) 657-4045. Penn State Hershey Medical Group, Colonnade Building (814)272-4445

