



VULVOVAGINAL HYGIENE

Tips to maintaining vulvar hygiene

Soaps & Bathing

- Wash vulva no more than once a day with lukewarm water
- When bathing in general, use mild, fragrance-free soap (or water only)
- Avoid bubble baths, hot water, bath oils
- Try not to put soap directly on the vulva; never wash inside the vagina
- Gently clean with hands (no scrubbing) and pat or air-dry
- Shower when washing hair; rinse vulva well



Avoid Irritants

- No douching, wipes, deodorant sprays, or scented "feminine" products (e.g., Vagisil)
- Avoid perfumed soaps, shampoos, bath oils on vulva
- Limit spermicides if sensitive



Clothing

- Wear breathable cotton underwear (white preferred)
- Avoid tight jeans, thongs, pantyhose, or girdles
- Choose loose pants/skirts
- Go without underwear at night to keep area open to air
- Remove wet swimsuits or workout clothes promptly



Laundry

- Wash underwear and towels with mild, fragrance-free detergent
- Skip fabric softeners, dryer sheets, bleach
- Keep white towels/washcloths for your own use

Pads & Toilet Paper

- Use unscented pads/liners, preferably cotton or hypoallergenic
- Change pads often or swap for clean underwear if light discharge
- Use incontinence pads only for leakage (not menstrual ones)
- Choose plain white toilet paper; wipe front to back
- If irritated, rinse with a peri-bottle instead of wiping
- Apply a thin layer of barrier ointment (e.g., petroleum jelly) when using pads to protect the vulvar skin from irritation



Sex

- Choose water- or silicone-based lubricants (avoid spermicides; oil can damage condoms)
- Wash sex toys/dilators with mild soap, rinse and dry well
- Empty bladder and gently wash vulva after intercourse

