

How to Deal With Painful or Itchy Vulva?

Genital skin is very sensitive and it is important to prevent it from getting irritated by chemicals or physical means. Consult a doctor as soon as possible if you feel itchy or burning pain over the vulval area. Do not use over-the-counter medications without seeing a doctor.

Vaginal Discharge

Almost all women have more vaginal discharge in pregnancy. It should be clear and white and should not smell unpleasant.

You should consult a doctor if you have the followings. You might have a vaginal infection.

- The discharge is coloured or with blood
- The discharge smells strange
- You feel itchy or sore



Hygiene

- Do not wash genitals excessively. Treat the skin of the genital areas very gently.
- Do not use douches.
- Do not use bubblebath or any perfumed creams, soaps or feminine hygiene products.
- Avoid getting shampoo on the vulval area.
- Plain water / saline can be used for cleaning and soothing the symptoms.
- Urinate before the bladder is full. After using the toilet, wipe from the vulva to the back. This may help to prevent the bacteria that normally live in your rectum from getting into your vagina. Rinse the vulva with water after urination.
- Use soft, white, unscented toilet paper.
- Use 100% cotton menstrual pads and tampons.

Clothing and Laundry

- Wear cotton underwear and loose fitting pants or skirts.
- Do not wear pantyhose (wear thigh or knee high stockings instead).
- Ensure the underwear and any clothing that come into contact with vulva is rinsed well.
- Do not use fabric softener on undergarments because the chemicals will stay in the fabric, causing irritation to the vulval skin.



Sexual Intercourse

- When the vulva is itchy, do not use lubricants or petroleum jelly.
- Avoid intercourse when there is pain in the genitals.
- Gently apply ice or frozen gel pack wrapped in a towel onto the vulval skin to relieve burning sensation, if any, after intercourse.
- Urinate to prevent infection and rinse the vulva with cool water immediately after intercourse.

Physical Activities

- Avoid exercise that put direct pressure on the vulva e.g. cycling.
- Gently apply a frozen gel pack wrapped in a towel onto the vulval skin to relieve symptoms after exercise.
- Don't swim in highly chlorinated swimming pools and avoid the use of hot tubs.
- Remove wet bathing suits and sports clothes promptly.

Everyday Living

- Use a foam rubber ring for long periods of sitting.
- Try to intersperse different positions with periods of standing.
- The sensation of genital area can be affected by emotion. Symptoms can appear worse at time of stress. Adequate rest, listening to soft music and performing stretching exercise can help to lessen the severity of vulval discomfort.