

Bayside OB-GYN, Inc.
235 Plain Street Providence, RI 02905
(401) 421-1710 Fax (401) 861-2164
(www.baysideobgyn.org)

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 ½ of 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 making thigh-high stockings.
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 perfumes. No soap is best in the vaginal area. If you must use soap, try Aveeno Oatmeal and Neutrogena soaps. These are the most recommended.
2. Do not scrub vulvar skin with a washcloth. Washing with your hands is enough for a good cleansing.

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3. Avoid all bubble baths, bath salts, and scented oils.
4. Pat dry, rather than rubbing with a towel. Use a hairdryer on a cool setting when skin is sore or tender.
5. Avoid all over-the-counter creams or ointments without asking your healthcare provider first and avoid douching!
6. 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.
7. 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 infections, increased discharge or toxic shock syndrome. If pads are irritating, consider using "Seventh Generation". These pads can be found in health food stores or by calling 1-800-456-1177.
8. To decrease irritation, small amounts of A & D ointment may be applied to the vulva as often as needed to protect the skin. This may also help to decrease skin irritation during your period and after urination.
9. Do not shave the vulvar area. Shaving may cause irritation and lead to infection.
10. Avoid scented toilet paper.
11. Avoid all feminine hygiene sprays, perfumes, adult or baby wipes. Pour lukewarm water over the vulva during and after urinating if urination causes burning.
12. Larger women may have problems with chronic dampness. Avoid tight clothing and synthetic fabrics. Blow-dry the area as often as needed.
13. Using a lubricant may help dryness during intercourse. Use a small amount of Almond Oil, which can be obtained at health food stores, for lubrication. Astroglide, available from the pharmacy, should be used with condoms. A soniatex condom, called Avanti, is available and is made of polyurethane.