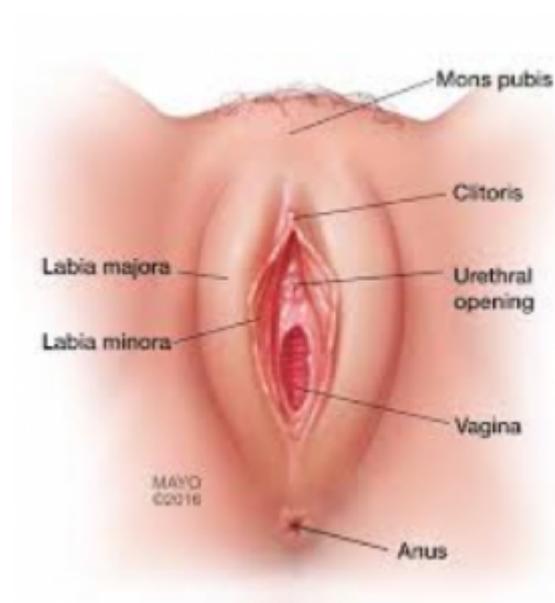


General vulval and vaginal care measures

This care leaflet is for women with sensitive skin including vulval itching and soreness, vulval eczema, vulval lichen sclerosus, vulval skin conditions, vulvodynia, after vaginal childbirth, recurrent thrush, menopause and anyone who finds sex painful.



- Adopt an anti-inflammatory diet, eating mostly whole plant foods, rich in fruit, vegetables, wholegrains, nuts, seeds, herbs and spices and beans and legumes (*see leaflet on whole food plant based diet*)
- Use non-soap-based washes and emollients
- Use an emollient (moisturiser) cream instead of soap to clean the genital area. This is also soothing.
- Use water to cleanse but avoid over washing
- Take showers rather than baths in general
- Lubricants may be useful during sex, if it is painful. The regular use of water-based vaginal moisturisers can also help keep the area supple and make sexual intercourse less uncomfortable.
- Local vaginal oestrogen may be appropriate in some situations to help with vaginal atrophy, especially in post-menopausal women.
- The use of natural oils can be helpful and the daily application of natural oils such as coconut, Vitamin E or almond oil after a shower to lock the moisture in and around the vulval area helps many of my patients. Just massage the oil into vulval area and DON'T WORRY if some of the oil enters the vagina. It's safe. We eat oils!
- Use Non-Biological laundry detergents, preferably those without significant chemicals
- An eco-egg with minimal chemicals to wash underwear may be helpful

General vulval and vaginal care measures

- Wear cotton underclothes and use soft toilet paper and soft towels
- Opt for light coloured over dark underclothes as there tends to be more harsh dyes in the latter
- Use kinder menstrual care products such as the menstrual cup, period pants, natural material pads or unbleached sanitary ware
- Use incontinence pads and panty liners that are organic, unbleached and with fewer chemicals
- Avoid underwear, especially at night to allow the genital area to breathe
- Avoid synthetic underclothes and tights
- Avoid perfumed toiletries, bubble baths, soaps and perfumes in the genital area. These may irritate the skin and can lead to increased dryness by removing natural body oils and beneficial bacteria, making symptoms worse.
- Avoid feminine wipes and toilet wipes, as usually laden with harsh chemicals
- Avoid fabric conditioners
- Avoid scratching, better to use a cold flannel
- Avoid tight clothes, which can make the area hot and itchy

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