

# CARE OF THE OUTER GENITALIA (VULVA)

Care for the skin and mucous membranes in the vulva help to keep the outer genitalia healthy and fresh. The vulva is made of skin, mucous membranes and glands. What they secrete - discharge from the vagina - is what keeps the area clean and healthy, and this discharge is completely normal. Avoid scratching and scraping as much as possible.

## WASHING

The skin and mucous membranes in the vulva are sensitive. It is therefore important to avoid washing with too many chemicals that can be irritating for the area. Avoid washing too often as it can irritate the skin. If you have problems in or around the vulva it's best to rinse with lukewarm water. Avoid using soap/shampoo/bubble baths.

You can apply oil to the vulva before you wash. Use your fingers or for example a cotton pad and use almond oil, olive oil, peanut oil, or something similar. Some baby oils can contain salicylic acid and can therefore cause burning. When you are in the shower or bath separate your labia from one another with your fingers and wash them gently with water.

## CLOTHING

Avoid tight-fitting clothing, to make sure that the area has access to air. Use 100% cotton underwear. Wash your underwear in environmentally and skin friendly soap and avoid detergents.

## WHO CAN I CALL WITH QUESTIONS?

You are welcome to call the Women's Clinic every weekday from 8.00 - 15.00 on 36 46 71 40.

Try to sleep without underwear or at least in something light and loosely fitted.

## MENSTRUATION

If you have troubles here, try buying hypoallergenic products of natural cotton. Change often.

## OTHER ADVICE

Avoid as much as possible use of pantyliners outside of your period - instead, take a change of underwear with you and change a little extra. Don't use deodorants, perfumes, or similar products in the vulvar area.

Don't wash inside your vagina, as this changes the pH on the skin and in the vagina. It's best to have a low pH with a high amount of lactic acid bacteria, which are part of the vagina's natural way of keeping clean.

Rinse with water or oil and empty your bladder after intercourse.

In periods where the skin feels extra fragile or dry, apply for example Warming basic cream, Locobase repair, Decubal, Panthenol salve or Ceridal morning and evening. None of those creams contain parabens. Use silicon oils or almond oil as lubricant.

Contraceptive pills can also dry your mucous membrane out. Remember to use another kind of contraception if you stop using the pill or are taking a break.

Revised April 2020. To be revised on an ongoing basis and certainly no later than 1 April 2022, before in case of any significant changes.