

UAB Health Education

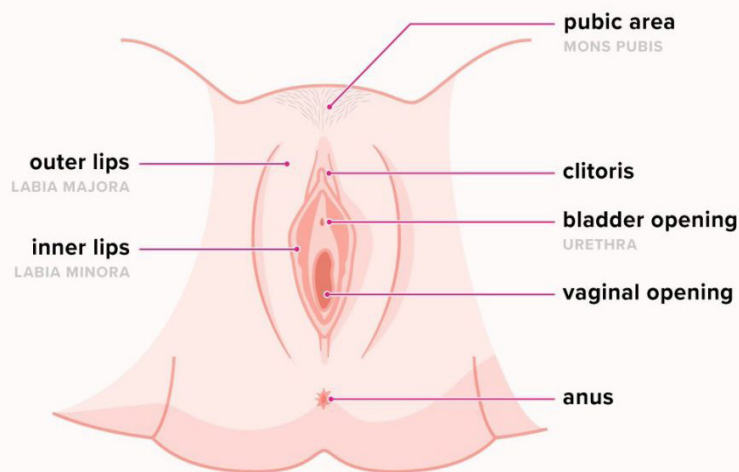
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

VAGINAL HEALTH



Overall vaginal health is important regardless of sexual activity. A normal vagina is populated by many small, beneficial bacteria called lactobacilli that prevent other organisms from infecting the vagina and maintain the vagina's normal environment. With the normal vaginal balance, there is usually a small amount of clear to white vaginal discharge. Around the time of ovulation, which is about 2 weeks after the start of the last menstrual period, there is often an increase in discharge for a few days which may be slightly thicker in consistency. Unhealthy vaginal discharge may be odorous, be thicker or a different color, or be associated with burning, itching, or irritation of the vagina or vulva. Contact Student Health Services if you are experiencing these symptoms as they may indicate vaginal irritation or infection.

vulva



RESOURCES

Women's Health.gov <https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/douching>

Young Women's Health.org <https://youngwomenshealth.org/2017/04/19/vulvar-and-vaginal-care-and-cleaning/>

VAGINAL HYGIENE

Maintaining vaginal hygiene is relatively simple. Using “hygiene” products for the vulva or vagina can actually cause irritation to the area, called vaginitis. To keep the vulva and vagina clean try the following:

- When showering or bathing wash the vulva with water or mild soap. Do not use soap or cleansers inside the vagina.
- Rinse completely and pat dry your vulva with a soft towel. Keep your vulvar area clean, dry and cool.
- Avoid tight-fitting clothing.
- Choose cotton underwear. Wash new underwear with mild detergent prior to wearing.
- Never douche or use feminine deodorant sprays, bubble baths, wipes, bath oils, or other perfumed products on your vulva or in your vagina because these can cause irritation and can remove your natural protective fluids.



STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The University of Alabama at Birmingham

Clinic: 205-934-3580

After Hours: 205-934-3411

<https://www.uab.edu/students/health/>

Last Updated 08/2020