

Vulvar Skin Care

Our goal in vulvar skin care is to decrease exposure to chemicals, rubbing, and moisture. The following are suggestions our patients have found helpful:

Laundry Products

- Use detergents free of dyes, enzymes and perfumes on any item that comes into contact with your skin.
- Use 1/3 to 1/2 the recommended amount of detergent.
- Do not use fabric softener or dryer sheets.
- If you must use a stain remover, soak and rinse all underwear and towels in clear water then wash on regular washing cycle.

Clothing

- Wear white, all cotton underwear. Cotton allows air in and moisture out.
- Avoid pantyhose. If you must wear them, cut the crotch out or wear thigh highs.
- Avoid tight clothing.
- Avoid clothing made of synthetic fibers.
- Remove wet bathing and exercise clothing as soon as possible.

Bathing and Hygiene

- Avoid soaps, lotions, gels, bubble baths, bath salts, scented oils or any other bath products that contain perfume. Try products that say “*hypo-allergenic*”.
- You may use *Keri Oil* on your body after showering, however do not apply oil to vulva.
- Do not scrub the vulvar skin with a washcloth. Washing with your hand and warm water is enough for good cleansing. Pat dry or use a hairdryer on warm to dry the vulvar area.
- Use white, unscented toilet paper.
- Do not use baby wipes, perfumes, or hygiene sprays near the vulva.
- Do not use deodorized tampons or pads. Choose pads that have cotton lining that touches the skin.
- Avoid all over-the-counter creams and ointment except *A&D Ointment*. A&D may be applied to your vulva as often as need to protect the skin.
- Do not douche. Baking soda soaks using 4-5 tablespoons of baking soda in bath water can be helpful to soothe itching and burning.
- Do not shave the vulvar area.
- To help dryness and irritation during intercourse, use *pure vegetable oil* such as Crisco.
- If you have trouble with chronic dampness, try the following to keep as dry as possible: You may use *Gold Bond Powder* or *Zeosorb Powder* on vulvar and groin area 1-2 times per day. Wear cotton fabrics and carry an extra pair of underwear so that you can change if you need to.

Birth Control

- The new low-dose birth control pills do not increase your chances of getting a yeast infection.
- Condoms, contraceptive jellies, creams, or sponges may cause itching and burning. Talk to your health care provider about birth control options.

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