



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg
University Health Board

Care of the Vulval Skin

Vulval Clinic
Singleton Hospital

The vulval skin is very sensitive and can react to irritants which the rest of your skin can tolerate. There are also many substances which can cause allergic reactions in the genital area such as fragrances. Just like your hands or face, your vulval skin can suffer from dryness leading to soreness, and needs to be treated with tender loving care. Even if you are having treatment for a skin disorder, good skin care can reduce your symptoms considerably.

Washing

Washing the skin tends to cause dryness which can add to itch and soreness. Showers are generally preferable to baths and you should also avoid washing just to relieve symptoms.

Avoid soaps, bubblebath or any perfumed oils in the bath or shower. You may find it better to wash your hair separately as shampoo can also irritate the vulval skin. Pat the genital skin dry with a fluffy towel rather than scrubbing hard, or use a hairdryer on a cool setting!

Aqueous Cream and **Hydromol** are 2 soap substitutes you can buy cheaply over the counter. They can also be applied as soothing cooling moisturisers to any area of skin, and can be used in unlimited quantities.

Clothing

Cotton underwear is best, avoid nylon tights and tight trousers or leggings. At home go without underwear in a long skirt if you can.

Do Nots

The following are to be avoided at all costs!

Talcum powder, even baby powder.

Perfumed body sprays or "feminine deodorants"

Moist toilet tissue or wet wipes - use cotton wool dampened with water or put some Aqueous cream on the toilet paper instead if ordinary toilet paper irritates you.

Over-the-counter creams marketed for relief or itching, many of these contain local anaesthetics and fragrance, which are potential causes of allergic reactions.