

Self Care

Vaginal discharge is natural, it helps clean and protect the vagina from infections.

You can not prevent discharge but there are things you can do to help maintain a healthy discharge.



To help avoid irritation, soreness or dryness and prevent infections:

Do

- Wash the skin around your vagina gently using warm water
- Wear cotton underwear if possible
- Wipe from front to back
- Use a condom during sex

Don't

- Do not use perfumed soaps or gels
- Do not use deodorants or scented hygiene wipes
- Do not wash inside your vagina (douche)

Other helpful resources



Hello Clue



Leeds Sexual Health



Patient Info

Vaginal Discharge



Information on vaginal discharge, what is considered healthy discharge and when to see your healthcare provider.

What is Vaginal discharge?

Vaginal discharge is a fluid or mucus that keeps the vagina clean and moist. It protects the vagina from infection and is normal for women and girls to have.

Your vaginal discharge may change throughout your menstrual cycle and everyone's 'Normal' can be different.

Vaginal discharge is not usually anything to worry about if :

- The colour is clear, milky white or off-white.
- It does not have a strong or unpleasant smell: A slight odour might be present, especially around the time of your period or after sexual intercourse.
- The texture is watery and sticky or thick and like paste or changes between the two.
- The amount of discharge people produce varies. Factors like pregnancy, using hormonal contraception or ovulation can affect how much vaginal discharge you have.

If your vaginal discharge has any of the following please see your healthcare provider as this may indicate an infection or other problem:

- Grey, green or yellow discharge.
- Pink, bloody or brown discharge not around the time of your period.
- A strong, fishy or foul smell.
- If your discharge is lumpy, has bits in it, looks like foam or there is a change to the texture you usually have.
- Sudden changes in the amount of discharge without any other factors.
- You feel itchy or sore in the vaginal area.
- You experience pain during urination or intercourse.
- You bleed between periods or after sex.

It is important to remember menstruation, hormone changes, pregnancy and sex can produce changes in vaginal discharge this is normal and regular vaginal discharge should return.

Vaginal discharge can change due to a range of different circumstances including use of soaps and certain medications, not all infections are sexually transmitted.

Discharge colours and when to check with a GP

Normal



Clear or White

- Healthy Discharge

When to see a GP

Green, Yellow or Frothy

White but Thick and Lumpy

Grey

Foul Odour

When not menstruating

Pink

Bloody

If there is a significant change in your usual discharge and you are concerned

