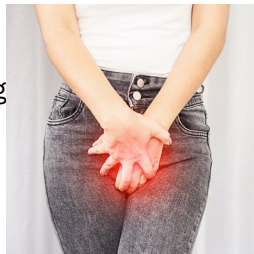




Vulvar Skin Care

Tips for vulvar skin care and conditions

- **Limit washing:** Wash the vulva once a day with lukewarm water. Avoid using soap directly as it can dry out the skin.
- **Be gentle:** After washing the area, let the vulva air dry or pat it gently with a towel instead of rubbing.
- **Moisturize daily after bathing as needed:** Use preservative/scent-free moisturizers, for example, Glaxal Base, Aveeno, Lubriderm, or CeraVe.
- **Soak and seal for sensitive, irritated, and itchy skin:**
 - Soak the vulva in warm water for 5–10 minutes and gently pat dry
 - Then, to seal the skin, apply a protective barrier such as petroleum jelly (Vaseline), unscented zinc oxide products (Sudocrem, Penaten), olive oil, coconut oil, or Crisco.
- **After using the bathroom:** Clean the vulva area from front to back after urinating and bowel movements.
- **Use hypoallergenic products:** When possible, choose 100% cotton menstrual and incontinence products or those labelled as hypoallergenic.



Try to **AVOID** the following:

- **Personal products:** scented soaps, sprays, shampoos, bath oils/bubbles, synthetic sanitary pads/panty liners, recycled toilet paper.
- **Laundry products:** scented detergents, fabric softeners, dryer sheets, and bleaches. Wash underwear with mild soaps or detergents; rinse well.
- **Douching and vaginal washing products,** wipes, and any vulvovaginal cosmetic or care products, unless recommended by your health care clinician.
- **Shaving or waxing** pubic hair near the vulva area.

Clothing

- **Avoid tight clothing,** such as underwear and jeans.
- **Choose white cotton underwear:** Avoid nylon underwear and dyed fabrics. Some fabric dyes in coloured underwear can be irritating to the skin.
- **Wear thongs and pantyhose less often,** especially if your skin is irritated.
- **At nighttime:** Don't wear underwear while sleeping to allow the vulva to air out.
- **Stay dry:** Change out of wet bathing suits and exercise clothes as soon as possible.

Sex

- **Lubricant:** Use water-based (K-Y jelly), silicone-based (Pink), or oil-based (coconut oil or olive oil) lubricants
Note: Oil-based lubricants can affect condom durability.
- **Contraception:** Lubricated or spermicide-containing condoms and latex condoms may cause irritation to the vulva. This can also happen with some contraceptive creams, jellies, or foams.
- **Discomfort:** If you feel burning, irritation, or pain during intercourse, talk with your clinician.

ONLINE RESOURCES

GynQI



Click on the “Vulva” tab to learn more about your specific condition and how to properly apply prescribed creams/ointments.

The BC Centre for Vulvar Health

Click on the “Patients” tab for information about:

- An introduction to vulvar skin health and care
- Different vulvar conditions, including vulvodynia/pain (some resources are available in multiple languages)



Sources:

1) Gynaecology QI Collaboration Canada (GynQI). <https://gynqi.com/for-patients/>; 2) BC Centre for Vulvar Health. <https://www.bcvulvarhealth.ca/>; 3) The Vulvodynia Primary Care Toolkit: Patient Resources. <https://www.vulvodyniatoolkit.com/resources>

