

Finally...

If you use products or treatments which you think may be causing or making your skin problem worse that have been prescribed by your GP or bought at a chemist, stop using them. Also, if your problem keeps coming back or is not getting any better, it is best to seek advice from a doctor or nurse as soon as possible.

Further information can be obtained from the following:-

Your local Genitourinary Medicine or Sexual Health Clinics – details of these can be found in the telephone book

www.bad.org.uk - this is the website of The British Association of Dermatologists

www.patient.co.uk

www.nhs.uk

Issue Date 01/2010

Conifer House
32-36 Prospect Street
Hull HU2 8PX
Tel: 01482 336336

www.luvhull.co.uk
www.luveyorks.co.uk

Tips For Your Bits

Patient Information leaflet



Introduction

This leaflet has been produced to help those individuals who have a variety of conditions which affect the skin around the genital and anal areas. This practical guide describes simple, cheap but effective ways of helping you to keep the skin in these areas healthy. Some skin problems and infections may be relieved or avoided by following the advice given below.

DO'S

Men and Women

- Wash your hands, especially if you work with chemicals/harmful substances, before and after touching the genital/anal areas
- If convenient, try wearing clothing and underwear which are loose fitting
- Wear underwear made from natural materials e.g. cotton, silk
- Have cool/lukewarm baths or showers
- Wash genital and anal areas once daily
- If using shower gels, soaps and other toiletries, ensure they are not coloured or perfumed/scented or just use water to wash with
- Use moisturisers to keep genital skin soft e.g. emulsifying ointment – these can easily be bought over the counter and a prescription is not needed and they can be used as substitutes for soap
- Gently pat dry genital and anal skin after bathing
- Wash hair over bath/sink so that the shampoo doesn't run down the body over the genital/anal areas
- Use non-biological washing powder or other clothing washing products which are made for "sensitive skins" and use these sparingly
- Use extra rinse cycles when using a washing machine to wash clothes
- Try "hypoallergenic" or non-latex condoms instead of latex rubber ones
- Be aware that some products e.g. creams, ointments and oils can damage condoms and diaphragms so always wash genital and anal areas before using condoms/diaphragms

- Use white, unbleached toilet paper
- Have a check up with a doctor or nurse if you notice any unusual spots, lumps or discharge in the genital/anal area

Men

- If possible, dry the penis after urination
- If you have a foreskin, gently pull it back and wash thoroughly underneath it once a day
- Some men with dry or tight foreskins find it helpful to use a skin oil which is not coloured or perfumed/scented

Women

- Always wipe toilet paper from front to back after going to the toilet
- Try sanitary towels & tampons made from organic cotton - you may need to check the packets/labels to check that they don't contain pesticides or other harmful substances
- Wear stockings rather than tights

DON'TS

There are a number of things which can cause skin problems or make them worse in the genital and anal areas. Soreness, irritation, itching, spots or rashes may be caused by the following and they should be avoided:

Men and Women

- Avoid tight fitting clothing e.g. leggings, rubber underwear
- Avoid synthetic materials made from e.g. nylon, elastane, spandex which are very stretchy/elastic and often found in tights, swimwear, cycling shorts, underwear

- Avoid perfumed/scented & coloured soap, shower gels, bubble bath
- Avoid overwashing/scrubbing of genital/anal area
- Facecloths and sponges should not be used to wash the genital/anal area
- Washing hair in bath should be avoided
- Avoid applying antiseptics and essential oils e.g. tea tree oil, to the bathwater
- Waxing, shaving and plucking hairs in the genital area is not recommended
- Biological washing powder should not be used
- Fabric conditioners which are added when washing or tumble drying clothes should be avoided
- Do not use short wash/rinse cycles on washing machine
- Known chemicals - these include methylchloroisothiazolinone, methylisothiazolinone which are often in shampoos and showergels and are in the list of ingredients on the labels of such products, should be avoided
- Do not wear underwear while sleeping

Men

- Avoid using deodorants, body sprays, aftershave etc in the genital and anal areas

Women

- Do not clean the vagina with jets of water or feminine washes (this is referred to as "douching")
- Avoid perfumed sanitary towels & tampons
- Do not leave a sanitary towel or tampon in place for more than 8 hours i.e. always replace these more frequently
- Avoid "feminine" wipes, sprays, washes and powders