

Anatomy of the Vulva



To better understand what's happening inside you, it helps to understand the basic anatomy of your vulva.

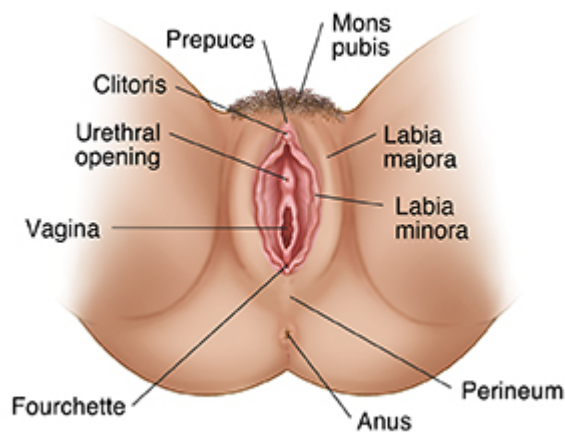
The vulva is the outer part of the female reproductive system. It's also part of the external genitalia.

The vulva includes the mons pubis. This is the rounded area in front of the pubic bones at the lower part of the belly (abdomen). It becomes covered with hair at puberty.

The vulva has two folds of skin or "lips." The outer folds are called the labia majora. The inner folds are called the labia minora. These skin folds protect the opening of the urethra and the vagina. The urethra is the tube that carries urine out of the body.

The inner folds of the vulva form a hood of skin called the prepuce or the hood of the clitoris. Below the prepuce is the clitoris. The clitoris is a sensitive piece of tissue that swells with blood when stimulated.

At the bottom of the inner folds of the vulva is the fourchette. This is where the labia minora meet. Below the fourchette is the perineum. This is also part of the vulva. The perineum ends at the anus. The anus is where stool leaves the body.



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