

Preventing Vaginal Infection



These steps can help you stay comfortable when treating a vaginal infection. They also help prevent future vaginal infections.

Keeping a healthy balance

Factors that change the normal balance in the vagina can lead to a vaginal infection. To help keep the balance normal, try these tips:

- Change out of wet bathing suits and damp exercise clothes as soon as possible. Yeast thrive in a warm, moist environment.
- Don't wear tight pants. Choose cotton underwear and stockings that have a cotton crotch. Cotton keeps you cooler and drier than synthetics.
- Don't douche unless advised by your healthcare provider. Douching can destroy friendly bacteria and change the vagina's normal balance.
- Wipe from front to back after using the toilet. This prevents bacteria from spreading from the anus to the vulva.
- Wash the vulva with mild, unscented soap or with plain water.
- Wash your diaphragm, spermicide applicators, and sex toys with mild soap and water after use. Dry them thoroughly before putting them away.
- Change tampons often (every 2 hours to 4 hours). Leaving a tampon in for too long may disrupt the balance of vaginal bacteria.
- Don't use vaginal sprays, scented toilet paper and soaps, and deodorant tampons or pads. These can cause vaginal irritation.

Staying healthy overall

Good overall health can help you resist infection. To be healthier:

- Help protect yourself from STIs (sexually transmitted infections) by using latex condoms during sex. Ask your healthcare provider for more information about safer sex.
- Eat a variety of healthy foods.
- Exercise regularly.
- Get enough rest and sleep.
- Stay at a healthy weight. If you need to lose weight, ask your provider for advice on how to start.

© 2000-2027 The StayWell Company, LLC. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions.
This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your Healthcare professional's instructions. Copyright Krames LLC.