

Ultimate Hygiene Guide

How to Care for Your Vagina

1

GET REGULAR SCREENINGS

Stay current with health screenings and see your gynecologist or healthcare provider for annual routine care like STI screenings.

**Call NDSU Student Health Service at (701) 231-7331 to make an appointment*



2

WHAT DOES MY DISCHARGE MEAN?

Discharge helps your vagina keep out viruses and bacteria; keeping the whole area healthy and clean.

- Healthy types of vaginal discharge should be odorless, white or transparent, and thick and sticky or slippery and stretchy.
- Contact your healthcare provider if you are experiencing an unusual increase in discharge; changes in color, smell, or texture; blood discharge outside your period; irritation, itching or burning.



3

CHANGE HYGIENE PRODUCTS OFTEN

It is important to change your hygiene products often to avoid infections and/or other disruptions to the vagina. If you have a regular flow, hygiene products like pads, tampons or menstrual cups should be changed or emptied every **4-6 hours**. For those with a heavier flow, these products should be changed every **3-4 hours**.



4

CLEANING MENSTRUAL CUPS

It is important to clean your cup to ensure it lasts from 2-10 years!

- At home, rinse it out with clean water and use a mild, oil-free, fragrance-free soap to give it a quick clean.
- In public, it may be harder to rinse your cup. Instead, use a piece of toilet paper to wipe it clean, making sure to remove small pieces of tissue.
- At the end of your cycle, boil the cup for 2-3 minutes for thorough cleaning.



5

AVOID TIGHT CLOTHING

It is recommended to wear breathable fabrics like cotton underwear. Synthetic fabrics can cause sweating and reduce air circulation. Excessive sweating and moisture can lead to growth of bacteria and yeast, causing vaginal infections.



WHOLE BODY HEALTH

6

Make healthy food choices and get regular movement. Not only is this good for your whole body, it's good for your vagina too. For example, eating foods that are rich in omega-3 acids, such as low-fat dairy foods, legumes, eggs, and whole grains, can help reduce many of the unwanted symptoms associated with the menstrual cycle.



7

PRACTICE SAFE SEX

Using protection such as condoms, dental dams, or internal condoms every time you have sex is one of the simplest ways to prevent STIs, vaginal infections and unwanted pregnancies.

**The Junk Mail program provides free safer sex supplies and will mail them right to your door! Visit bit.ly/NDSUjunkmail to order.*



8

JUST USE WATER

The vagina is a self-cleaning organ. Using harsh chemicals, prepackaged wipes or douching can disrupt its normal pH. Most of these products are marketed to help people with vaginas feel or smell 'cleaner' but are NOT backed by science. A gentle soap is OK for the external genitalia.



Keep in mind, not all women have vaginas and not all people with vaginas are women. Our services are inclusive for anyone who menstruates.

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