

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY
GUIDELINES FOR VULVAR SKIN CARE**

Our goal is to promote healthy vulvar skin by avoiding irritating products, excess moisture, or friction.

Laundry Products

- Use a hypoallergenic detergent on any clothing that comes in contact with your vulva, such as underwear, towels, and pajama bottoms.
- Do not use fabric softener in the washer or dryer.

Clothing

- Wear white, 100% cotton underwear. Avoid nylon underwear with a cotton crotch. 100% cotton is the best for avoiding moisture buildup.
- Avoid pantyhose. If you must wear pantyhose, either cut out the crotch or use thigh-highs.
- Avoid tight clothing made of synthetic fabrics. Remove bathing and exercise clothing as soon as possible.

Bathing and Hygiene

- Avoid bath soaps, lotions, gels, oils, bubble bath or any product that contains perfumes.
- Do not use soap or a washcloth directly on the vulvar skin. Instead just use warm water and your hand to clean the area.
- Pat dry rather than rubbing with a towel, or use a hairdryer on the cool setting.
- Sitting in ½ inch of cool water can help soothe vulvar itching and burning.
- Use white, unscented toilet paper.
- Avoid use of deodorized pads or tampons, and minimize use of any pads or tampons to days of heaviest menstrual flow.
- Do not douche.
- Do not shave or use depilatories on vulvar skin.
- Do not use condoms, spermicide, or vaginal sponges.
- Vulvar dryness can be treated with a small amount of Crisco.
- For dryness during intercourse, use a small amount of a water-based lubricant such as Astroglide or Slippery Stuff.