

Genital skin is delicate and more likely to become irritated than other skin on your body. Good skin care can improve dry, itchy, and irritated skin.

This information can help you care for your genital skin.

## Washing, showering or bathing

- Use a soap substitute like sorbolene or aqueous cream, or mild cleansers.
- When having a bath add a small amount of unscented bath oil. Take extra care as this can make the bath more slippery.
- Washing once a day is usually enough.
- Use cool to warm water.

## What to avoid

These products may cause dryness and irritation:

- Soaps and body washes
- Tea tree oil and antiseptics
- Bubble baths and bath salts
- Perfumed products, 'intimate hygiene products' and 'feminine wipes'
- Scented oils
- Scented toilet paper
- Moist cleaning tissues like 'wet wipes'
- Panty liners and pads (use tampons if possible). If you must use pads, use "unscented" ones and change them frequently
- Scented washing powders
- Genital sprays, douches and talcum powder.

## Decreasing friction or rubbing

- Use your fingertips when washing. Avoid using a washcloth.
- Dry your skin by gently patting it with a clean, dry towel. Don't rub it dry.
- Consider avoiding hair removal. Pubic hair reduces friction on your skin from clothing and skin to skin contact. Waxes, hair removal creams and shaving creams can irritate your skin. If you do want to shave, use a moisturising cream like sorbolene.
- Avoid G strings, tight underwear and tight clothing. Choose natural fibres rather than synthetic ones.
- Use a water-based lubricant for sex.

# Genital Skin Care



If you need more information or have any questions, please contact the Canberra Sexual Health Clinic on (02) 5124 2184.

## References:

Melbourne Sexual Health Centre (2018) Genital Skin Care Factsheet.

<https://www.mshc.org.au/SexualHealthInformation/SexualHealthFactSheets/GenitalSkinCare/tabid/260/Default.aspx>

## ACCESSIBILITY

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