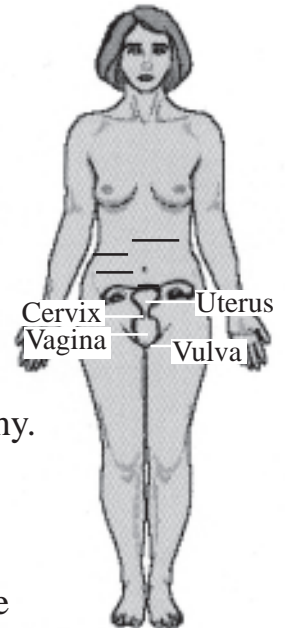


Taking Care of Yourself After Surgery Of Your Vulva



IH-I-166
W.D. 6/04
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Today you had surgery on your vulva. The vulva is the skin on the outside of the vagina. The skin that is taken off during surgery will be sent to the lab to be checked. This will help your health care provider know more about your condition. The surgery may take care of your problem, but we will not know this for sure for a long time. It is important that you come back for all your appointments to find out what you need to do to take care of this problem and keep yourself healthy.



How should I take care of myself after this surgery?

1. While you are healing, you will have some pain at the place where the surgery was done. This is normal. The pain usually does not last longer than 2 weeks. If your health care provider does not give you a prescription for pain medicine, you can take ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) for the pain. You do not need a prescription to buy these medicines. Take the medicine as it tells you to on the label or ask the pharmacist for help. Do not take any medicines to which you are allergic.

To ease the pain you can also press a cool, damp tea bag to the surgery area. Do not do this until 2 days after the surgery.



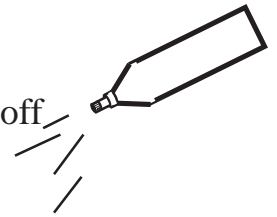
2. While you are healing, wash your hands with soap and water before and after you touch your vulva.
3. Every day, after washing your hands, check the surgery area with a hand-held mirror to be sure it is healing well.



4. Wash your vulva gently each day during your bath or shower. Use a mild, unscented soap and rinse well with water. Gently pat the area dry with a clean towel. You can also dry the area by using a hair dryer set on “low” or “cool”, but be sure not to get the area hot.

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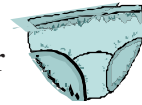
6. Clean your vulva each time after you use the toilet. Each day, fill a squirt bottle with fresh tap water. Keep it near the toilet and use it to squirt water on your vulva to rinse off after you urinate (pee). Dry off by gently patting dry with clean toilet paper. Do not rub your skin.



After a bowel movement, wipe away from your vulva with toilet paper, then rinse with water from the squirt bottle and gently pat dry with clean toilet paper.

7. For the next few weeks:

- Do not have sex while you are healing. When you are all healed and have no pain it is OK to have sex again. This could take a few weeks.
- Wear loose cotton underpants and do not wear tight-fitting pants. You will be most comfortable in cotton underpants and skirts after this kind of surgery.



Call the clinic if you have:

- A fever of 100.5° F (38° C) or higher.
- Pain that gets worse after 1 or 2 days, and which is not helped by pain medicine.
- Swelling or redness of your vulva.
- A bad smell or discharge (pus) from your vulva.



At your first clinic visit be sure we have your **correct name, address and telephone number**. With this information, we can reach you quickly if we need to. Be sure to let us know if there are changes in any of this information.

It is important to keep all your clinic appointments.

If you cannot keep your appointment or if you have any questions, call the clinic before your appointment time.

Ask to speak to _____.

Keep your next appointment!