

What is vulvovaginitis?

Vulvovaginitis is a very common disorder affecting girls between the ages of two and seven years. It is inflammation of the vagina and vulva (private parts).

What are the symptoms?

The main symptoms are vaginal discharge and soreness. The discharge can be yellow or green and can be smelly. Other symptoms may include redness of the vulval area, itching, and pain when passing urine.

Please note: If any blood is noticed in the discharge, then please inform your doctor as further investigations are required.

What causes it?

Vulvovaginitis is usually caused by repeated infections with bugs that are a normal part of the body. They often live in the gut, bowel, nose or mouth. These bugs are easily transferred to the vulval area by young girls as they learn to be responsible for their own personal hygiene.

Other factors that make girls who have not yet gone through puberty more prone to infection in this area are:

- A lack of female hormones which make the vagina and vulva thin and less resistant to infection.
- Before puberty the vagina is not acidic like after puberty so bugs can easily grow and cause infection.
- The vulva is very close to the anus (bottom) making it easy to spread bugs from the bowel to the vulva.
- The labia (lips) are flat and undeveloped and do not offer a barrier to infection.

Are any tests necessary?

Sometimes your doctor may take a swab of the discharge from the outside of the vagina. This does not hurt. If there is pain on passing urine, a urine sample may be sent to look for infection. If any infection shows up on either of these tests, it may be treated with antibiotics.

Is there any other treatment?

There is no single treatment, and the condition will disappear when puberty is reached. There are some helpful tips until that time which may help to improve symptoms:

- Teach your child to wipe from front to back after using the toilet.
- Make sure her bottom is completely clean after opening her bowels.
- Teach her to pass urine with her legs apart.
- Avoid bubble bath or scented soaps.
- Wear cotton knickers and avoid tightfitting clothing.
- Avoid wearing underwear at night.
- A barrier cream such as Sudocrem™ can be used if the skin is sore. Do not apply any other types of creams unless advised by your doctor.
- Constipation can make the problem worse. Try to avoid it with a healthy diet, or if it is a problem, get it treated by your GP.

Will the condition cause any long-term problems?

The infections associated with vulvovaginitis are different from those that adult women get and do not cause any problems with menstruation (periods) or fertility. There is no association with pelvic inflammatory disease or tubal damage.



If you require any further information, please contact:

Dr Gail Busby
Paediatric and Adolescent
Gynaecologist
Saint Mary's Hospital

(Secretary): 0161 276 6119
Monday-Friday, 9.00 am-4.00 pm

Suggestions, Concerns and Complaints

If you would like to provide feedback you can:

- Ask to speak to the ward or department manager.
- Write to us: Patient Advice and Liaison Services, 1st Floor, Cobbett House, Manchester Royal Infirmary, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9WL
- Log onto the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk - click on 'Comments'.

If you would like to discuss a concern or make a complaint:

- Ask to speak to the ward or department manager – they may be able to help straight away.
- Contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) – Tel: 0161 276 8686 e-mail: pals@cmft.nhs.uk. Ask for our information leaflet.

We welcome your feedback so we can continue to improve our services.

No Smoking Policy

The NHS has a responsibility for the nation's health.

Protect yourself, patients, visitors and staff by adhering to our no smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted within any of our hospital buildings or grounds.

The Manchester Stop Smoking Service can be contacted on

Tel: (0161) 205 5998
(www.stopsmokingmanchester.co.uk).

Translation and interpretation service

These translations say "If you require an interpreter, or translation, please ask a member of our staff to arrange it for you." The languages translated, in order, are: Arabic, Urdu, Bengali, Polish, Somali and simplified Chinese.

اذا كنت بحاجة الى مترجم، او ترجمة، من فضلك اطلب من احد موظفينا ترتيب ذلك لك
اگر آپ کو ایک مترجم، یا ترجمہ کی ضرورت ہے، تو براہ کرم ہمارے عملے کے کسی رکن سے کہیں کہ وہ آپ
کے لیے اس کا انتظام کرے۔

আপনার যদি একজন দোভাষী, অথবা অনুবাদের প্রয়োজন হয়, দয়া করে আমাদের একজন
কর্মীকে বলুন আপনার জন্য ইহা ব্যবস্থা করতে।

Jeśli Pan/Pani potrzebuje tłumacza lub tłumaczenie prosimy w tym celu zwrócić się do członka personelu.

Haddii aad u baahantahay tarjubaan, fadlan waydii qof ka mid ah shaqaalahayga si uu kuugu.

如果你需要翻译或翻译员, 请要求我们的员工为你安排



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Saint Mary's Hospital

Vulvovaginitis

Information for parents/carers

