



ARTICLE

**“GOOD VAGINAL HYGIENE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF ACIDITY
AS NATURAL PROTECTION AGAINST INFECTIONS”**

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Hygiene

Our skin is the largest organ of the human body. Skin protects against influences of the environment, excretes waste products with sweat glands and protects against dehydration. An important protective factor is the skin oil that is produced by sebaceous glands. This sebum is not only a protective layer for the skin but also a nutrient for certain bacteria which thereby produce acid substances; the skin becomes a little acidic. Most bacteria don't grow well in an acidic environment. The acidic environment helps to establish a healthy balance between the always present bacteria and the bacteria which may threaten to attack us.

Hygiene regards cleanliness and not smelling badly. However we should be very careful that we don't damage the protective function of our skin with our hygienic actions. Too much cleaning is just as bad as too little. With too much washing, especially with for example nice smelling body washes, our skin oil is removed all the time. By removing skin oil we remove an important protective function of the skin. It is therefore to apply oil on the skin after washing with such products. That is also important in the intimate area.

Mucous tissue

Mucous tissue is a different sort of skin with special cells which produce protective slime. Depending of the sort of mucous tissue the function of the slime is protection, defence, moisturizing or support of digestion of food. An important difference with skin is that mucous tissue has no sweat or sebum glands. Many surfaces inside our body are covered with mucous tissue. It covers cavities such as the nose, the mouth, the vagina and all of the intestines. Just like for the skin, a healthy balance between the always present bacteria and the bacteria which may threaten to attack us is important for the mucous tissue. Think of the mouth and a healthy or a damaged set of teeth, think of your bowels and diarrhoea. And think of the vagina.

The vaginal mucous tissue

The vaginal mucous tissue has nutrients for the protective bacteria; the lactobacilli. They produce lactic acid, that offers protection against the growth of undesired bacteria and virus. The vagina is much more acid than the skin, because the mucous tissue is more vulnerable for the attack of unwanted microorganisms than the skin.

The vaginal mucous tissue has a special function in our reproduction and is strongly influenced by the hormones of the monthly cycles. A special problem that we face is the fact is that the human being is one of the few animals which have sex just for pleasure. Not only for procreation. Human beings don't take the monthly cycle into account, which really only prepares the vaginal tissues for sex during ovulation. By having sex outside this moment we run into risk, because the vaginal mucous tissue has optimal protective properties during ovulation. As a consequence we have to take extra care of the healthy condition of the vagina.



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STD

Everyone knows about sexually transmitted diseases such as Syphilis, Chlamydia and HIV that are transmitted with the ejaculation of semen.

Most people know that the ejaculation fluid is slightly salty but they probably don't know why that is. That is because semen cells can't stand acid; they lose their tail immediately in a healthy acidic vagina. It was shown that with an acid gel such as Multi-Gyn ActiGel semen cells stop moving within one minute and die. The ejaculation fluid neutralizes the vaginal acidity with its own saltiness.

Unfortunately this saltiness also creates an environment in which unwanted microorganisms can grow. Research has shown that HIV is also very sensitive to acidity and can't survive in a healthy acid vagina. This explains why HIV is not transmitted by skin contact but by semen, blood, mucous tissue of the bowel and mother milk.; because these are all neutral to slightly salty. **It is therefore very important to keep the vaginal environment acid.** This is possible with the correct vaginal hygiene. Of course the use of a condom is best to avoid any problems.

Vaginal hygiene

As was the case with the skin vaginal hygiene should be a combination of keeping yourself clean and eliminate bad smell without damaging the protective function. In case of the vagina and the "misuse" of it by the human being we also have to take extra measures. The extra measures are:

1. protection of the mucous tissue against damages (lubricants)
2. removal of the left ejaculation with douching
3. restore the vaginal acidity in order to restore the useful, protective bacterial growth

Douching with a vaginal douche – certainly when applied frequently – should be combined with making the vagina acid with a gel such as Multi-Gyn ActiGel. How often these measures have to be taken is individual. In case of the use of a condom these will not be necessary every day but a woman may nevertheless like them. In such cases it is extra important not to make the vagina "dry" (compare to putting oil on the skin) and always insert an acid gel. For vaginal douching just simply lukewarm water can be used. Safe and not aggressive for the mucous tissue are also Multi-Gyn effervescent tablets. Also when using condoms an acid gel such as Multi-Gyn ActiGel is an extra safety measure; it is a good and protective lubricant that neutralizes the harmful bacteria.