

Unpacking terminology around a healthy vagina

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Just when you thought you knew all the terminology around a healthy vagina, another weird and wonderful V-term hits the headlines! There's no doubt the vagina is a fantastic organ that functions as far more than just reproductive machinery.



If you want to keep your vagina healthy, it helps to have a firm grasp on vaginal terminology so you can better understand what's normal and what's not. We unpack the terminology around a healthy vagina.

Vaginal pH balance: We all know it's essential to restore balance in our lives (think yin and yang) but did you know that maintaining the pH balance of the vagina is essential to keeping it healthy? A normal vaginal pH is usually anything from 3.8 to 4.2.¹ In the vagina, a higher pH value could cause infections as it can allow bacteria and yeast to thrive.²

Protective lactobacilli: While the idea that your vagina is home to millions of bacteria (AKA your vaginal microbiome)² these are roomies you want to have around. One type, called lactobacilli, maintains the normal acidity of the vagina. By doing so, lactobacilli helps keep the lining of the vagina healthy and prevent the growth of certain bacteria that cause infections.³ So let's all cheer for lactobacilli!

Bacterial vaginitis: Bacterial what, you may ask? Bacterial vaginosis is the most common vaginal infection and results when the number of protective lactobacilli decreases. The condition often results in vaginal discharge that may be grey or white, thin and profuse. Usually, the discharge has a fishy odour. Bacterial vaginosis is treated with an antibiotic, so speak to your doctor if you have any concerns.⁴

Discharge: The vagina is designed to keep itself clean with the help of natural secretions (yes, you guessed it, the correct terminology is *discharge*). Besides your period as part of your natural menstrual cycle, it's normal to produce clear or white secretions from your vagina. Changes in the amount of discharge can be 100% hormonal – linked to the menstrual cycle, pregnancy or menopause. It's a good idea to avoid perfumed soaps, gels and antiseptics as these can affect the healthy balance of bacteria and pH levels in the vagina and cause irritation.⁵

Vaginal atrophy: Normally, the walls of the vagina stay lubricated with a thin layer of clear fluid. The hormone oestrogen helps maintain that fluid and keeps the lining of your vagina healthy, thick and elastic. A drop in oestrogen levels reduces the amount of moisture available. It may seem like a minor irritation. But the lack of vaginal moisture can have a massive impact on your sex life. Fortunately, several treatments are available to relieve vaginal dryness, the most common treatment being topical oestrogen therapy.⁶

GynaGuard products are categorised into three ranges for ease of use: the Comfort Range is your gentle, go-to range for everyday feminine hygiene. It consists of the Essential Intimate Wash, Intimate Cleansing pH Bar, Intimate Comfort Gel, Daily Comfort Sensitive Wipes, and Foam Bath (fragrance-free and lightly fragranced variants).

The Control Range focuses on restoring pH balance and soothing discomfort and irritations and includes Ultimate Intimate Wash and Vaginal Capsules. The Intimate Range comprises Lubricating Moisturising Gel, specially formulated to enhance natural lubrication, soothe irritation and relieve dryness.



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