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Information on Vaginal Discharge

All women have some vaginal discharge, it is called Leukorrhea. The amount and consistency of the discharge will vary from woman to woman and is related to the individuals' menstrual cycle. A normal may be clear or white, does not have an unpleasant odor, and is not itchy or irritating to the skin. Discharge may become stringier and mucus like two weeks before menstruation due to ovulation. Sometimes, vaginal discharge can have a fishy odor after intercourse. This is likely due to dead sperm being cleansed from the vagina. If an odor persists it is important to see a medical professional to rule out a bacterial or fungal infection. Some methods of birth control may affect the amount of normal vaginal discharge. (For example, Nuvaring)

Ideas to Prevent a Vaginal Infection

1. Women can develop a bacterial infection called bacterial vaginosis or BV that is not considered a bacterial infection. It is quite common and is treated by your medical practitioner with antibiotics. BV can be avoided by using a little common sense. Here are some tips:
 - a. Keep your female parts clean
 - b. Pelvic rest (don't have sex over and over again the same day)
 - c. Wear cotton under-pants, no panty hose or thong under-pants
2. Cleanliness and hygiene are very important and one of the easiest things to do. Here are some tips:
 - a. Avoid long soak in a tub with perfumed oils or soaps
 - b. Be sure to disinfect you tub before and after you use it.
 - c. Avoid vaginal deodorants (they can irritate you skin, made odor worse, and do not prevent infections)
 - d. Avoid all vaginal hygiene sprays and deodorants as well as deodorant or scented tampons, pads, panty liners, and toilet paper since these products' tend to alter the natural environment of the vagina and make it more susceptible to irritation and infection
3. Douching is not recommended because it can wash out your natural bacteria that prevents infection from occurring. Or the fluid can push a vaginal infection up in to the uterus and cause Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) which a potentially life-threatening problem.
4. Drink plenty of water. You should drink 8 8oz glasses of water a day.
5. Always wipe front to back. If you wipe back to front you can introduce bacteria that is in stool into the vagina or the bladder.
6. Change tampons or pads after urination or bowel movement.
7. Urinate after sexual intercourse. Be sure to have your partner wash between anal and vaginal intercourse.

Rules to Follow if You have a Vaginal Infection

1. If you are prescribed an antibiotic; take it exactly the way your practitioner instructs. Take all of the medicine you are given. If you don't the infection can become dormant but not die and it will come back.

2. If you are using a vaginal cream or suppositories try to insert them at night so you will get the full benefit of the medicine and it won't just run out. Do not use tampons while using this type of medicine because the tampon will absorb the medicine and your infection will not resolve.
3. If you have a vaginal infection and use a diaphragm, soak the diaphragm for 30 minutes with betadine scrub (not solution) or a 70% rubbing alcohol after using prescribed medication for 2 days and again when medication is completed.
4. Sexual intercourse should be avoided for at least one week, and preferably throughout the entire course of treatment. Intercourse can be very irritating to the inflamed vagina and cervix during an infection and can slow the healing process. In addition, the germs that you have can spread to your partner. If your partner is male he should use a condom. If your partner is female, she should use a female condom or barrier-method
5. Lack of lubrication before sex can cause vaginal and bladder infections. Water soluble jelly is the best form of lubrication. KY jelly is the most common.