

Patient Information



Kingston Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Vulvovaginitis in girls

<https://kingstonhospital.nhs.uk/information/vulvovaginitis-in-girls>

This is for anyone looking after a young girl with vulvovaginitis.

What is vulvovaginitis?

Vulvovaginitis is a fairly common condition in young girls where the outer part of the vagina (vulva) becomes irritated and inflamed. It usually affects young girls who have not started puberty.

It is uncomfortable but usually responds well to simple steps which can be taken at home. Some girls have symptoms many times and others only once.

What causes it?

Vulvovaginitis is caused by irritation of the skin by urine, moisture or other irritants (soap, bubble baths, detergents). It is often made worse by threadworms which cause itching around the child's bottom.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include any of the following:

- pain, redness and itching to the vulva
- pain and discomfort when weeing (usually because the wee can irritate the sore skin).

What can I do to help my child at home?

- Encourage them to drink plenty of water or dilute squash.
- Ensure they wear cotton underwear and avoid tight clothing. Symptoms are often worse in a warm, moist or sweaty environment.
- Wash their clothes using non-biological washing detergent.
- Avoid using scented soaps or bubble baths and do not use talcum powder.
- During toileting, encourage them to wipe from front to back. Make sure they wash their hands well afterwards.
- Some children find vinegar baths helpful. Mix ½ cup of white vinegar into a warm, shallow bath and let your child soak in it for 10 to 15 minutes. They can do this daily, for a few days, to see if it helps.



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- Use a barrier cream, for example Sudocrem, in a thin layer to protect the skin.
- If they are constipated, ask your GP how to treat this, as it may make their symptoms worse.

Vulvovaginitis and other conditions

Urine infections: sometimes girls can have vulvovaginitis and a urine infection at the same time. Signs of a urine infection include weeing often, discomfort when weeing and/or a **temperature** of 38 degrees C or higher.

Contact your GP if you think your child might have a urine infection. Your GP may want to test a sample of your child's urine and prescribe antibiotics if needed.

Threadworms: these are tiny worms that live in the gut and lay their eggs at night around the anus/bottom. They make vulvovaginitis worse, so it is important they are treated.

The whole family should be treated at the same time. Bedding and towels should be given a hot wash (temperature 60 degrees) to get rid of any remaining threadworm eggs.

Ask your GP or pharmacist about treatment if you think your child may have threadworms. They are easily treated with a single dose of mebendazole (brand names Ovex or Vermos).

What if my child does not get better?

In most cases, using these methods will help make the symptoms of vulvovaginitis better within a few weeks.

Contact your GP if you've followed the advice in this leaflet and symptoms do not improve. They may suggest different creams, or take a swab of the area to check for other infections. They may refer your child to a paediatric clinic.

If you are still worried about your child, go to the Paediatric Emergency Department (part of your nearest A&E).

- Contact your GP if your child has fever and pain on passing urine. This is more likely to be a urinary tract infection and your child will need medical treatment.


Contacts

Paediatric Admin Team, Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm 020 8934 6403

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Translate

Please speak to a member of staff before or during your visit to the hospital if you require translation.

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