

MY CHANGING BODY

How should my genitalia smell?

KEY WORDS

genitalia | hygiene | penis | vagina



Similarly to other parts of the body, such as the scalp, belly button, and armpits, **intimate areas have their own distinct scent**, too.

The vagina of a woman and vaginal discharge should have a **neutral, mild, slightly acidic scent** (the French refer to it as the scent of incense). Vaginal discharge is the natural fluid produced by the vagina that helps maintain its health and cleanliness. The way it usually smells is completely natural, not unpleasant, and results from the presence of mucus and lactic acid bacteria in this organ. As for the colour, the discharge should be **clear or white**. If there is a change in colour to yellowish or greenish, as well as an odor such as a fishy smell, this is a sign of infection.



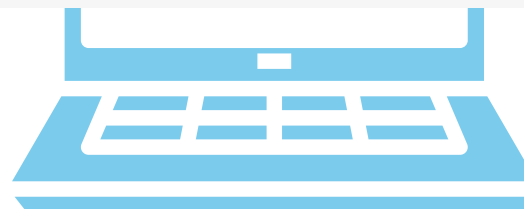
How a vagina smells also changes:

- depending on the day of the menstrual cycle
- depending on the level of sexual arousal

When it comes to the scent of the penis, it **doesn't differ much from the vagina**. A concerning odour would be that of yeast or fish, indicating an infection.

To avoid infection and unpleasant odours from intimate areas which may occur as a result, here are some best practices to follow:

- Clean your genitals regularly with appropriate cleansing products (fragrance-free soaps or just water). After washing, make sure your genitals are completely dry before putting on underwear.
- Wear cotton underwear that is not too tight, as it can trap moisture which bacteria and fungus need to survive
- Follow a healthy diet, including dairy products and plenty of water
- During antibiotic therapy, consider using gynecological probiotics for support
- Practice safe sex, such as using condoms and going to regular screenings for STIs, to prevent the spread of infections



FUN FACT: Our individual intimate scent, detectable not only in our private areas but also under the armpits, on the torso, head, and even to a lesser extent on the face, may even captivate and influence our choice of partner!

- Scent glands do not directly open onto the skin's surface but into hair follicles. This means that one of the significant functions of sweat, urine and, yes, even pubic hair, is to spread our natural **pheromones**, as they are chemicals which can non-verbally communicate to others when they are released during bodily functions such as the production of vaginal fluids.
- Scientists believe that the pheromones released can cause a reaction in others around us, and even help us attract a 'mate'.

We hope this has calmed some of your concerns regarding the smell of your intimate areas. Remember that the purpose of hygiene is to remain healthy and feel comfortable in your body!



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