

Foreskin Care for Adults

Tips for Regular, Basic Care

- Pull your foreskin back gently.
- Clean the skin and exposed surface of the head of the penis with gentle, non-perfumed soap and warm water.
- Avoid antibacterial soap.
- Do not wash too vigorously. The tissues of the foreskin are more fragile than other parts of the penis.
- Thoroughly rinse with water and dry the head of the penis with a towel.
- Be sure to return the foreskin to its usual position to cover the head of the penis.

Other Tips

- Avoid irritants (e.g., long pubic hair) and common allergens such as perfumes and fabric softeners.
- Wear white cotton or other “breathable” underwear.
- Use a lubricant during sexual intercourse to reduce trauma if partner dryness warrants it.

What to Watch Out For

Uncircumcised men are prone to certain medical conditions – the most common condition is balanoposthitis which is an inflammation of the penis head and foreskin. It has many different causes including infections, inflammation and poor hygiene. Its symptoms include rash, itch, odour, painful urination and difficulty pulling back (retracting) the foreskin. Many cases are mild so your doctor may advise conservative measures such as very gently retracting the foreskin whenever possible (e.g., several times per day) and taking sitz baths or soaking the penis head in a weak salt solution up to 2 to 3 times/day and carefully drying the area while being sure to reposition the foreskin fully afterwards. Other treatments and referral to a specialist may be needed if the condition persists or is more severe.

Common Problems of the Penis: What They Look Like

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/penis-health/Pages/how-to-wash-a-penis.aspx>
Penis Problems: A Visual Guide is located in the right hand column.

Sources:

- 1)** Barrisford GW. Balanitis and balanoposthitis in adults. *UptoDate*. 2014;
- 2)** BMJ. Anatomical penile abnormalities. *BMJ Best Practice*. 2016.;
- 3)** Lewinshtein DH, A-M. Paraphimosis. In: Rabinowitch Rea, ed. *Pediatric Urology for the Primary Care Physician, Current Clinical Urology*. New York: Springer Science+Business Media; 2015.

