

**VAGISIL BRANDED WEBSITE CONTENT TWO**  
**'Keep it fresh – how to stay fresh'**

Did you know you have more sweat glands in your intimate area than under your arms?

Everything from exercise to sex or hormonal changes can affect the natural pH balance of your vagina, leading to perspiration and odour.

Dr Vanessa Mackay\*, Consultant Gynaecologist at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow, explains everything you need to know about vaginal hygiene, giving you handy tips to stay fresh and dry all day – whether it's a gym day, date night or during the menopause.

**Dr Mackay's top tips for keeping fresh**

- Get to know your vagina. All women have one but each is different so it's important to understand what is 'normal' for you. By familiarising yourself with the way your vagina looks, feels and smells, it will empower you to be fearless about your vaginal health and you'll be able to monitor for any changes.
- The vagina naturally self-cleans so avoid the temptation to over-clean and never wash the inside of your vagina as this effectively 'washes' away the good bacteria which lives inside. Remember that vagina discharge is completely normal and your bodies way of cleaning itself.
- You should avoid using heavily perfumed soaps and shower gels as these can also affect the healthy balance of bacteria and pH levels in the vagina putting you at risk of irritation, infection and abnormal vagina discharge.
- Non-breathable fabrics can cause excess moisture so wearing loose-fitting clothing can help you to stay fresh and dry all day long. Plain cotton underwear can also help reduce friction, discomfort and keep the vulva dry.
- Exercising makes the vaginal area sweat but every woman is different when it comes to how much. It's important to change out of exercise clothes soon after completing a workout and cleanse the external vulval area with a gentle wash specially formulated for the pH of the vulval area.
- There's no such thing as a 'smelly vagina'. All vaginas have their own natural scent which is unique to each woman. A healthy vagina has a unique musky scent but you can use a non-perfumed soap to help prevent excessive odour.
- To keep fresh after sex, all you need to do is wash your vulval area with warm water and a mild soap or gentle intimate cleanser such as the Vagisil Intimate Wash range. If you're prone to getting infections, try taking a shower before having sex to reduce the risk that you'll end up with unfriendly bacteria in your body.
- Cleansing after the menopause is the same as before it! However, during the menopause, you may suffer from vaginal dryness, which can lead to irritation and discomfort. Consider using lubrication during sex, and only wash the vulval area with a mild soap and water. Never try to clean inside the vagina. If symptoms are severe or worsen, always visit your GP.