Dear Alice,

I've been wondering about the white stuff that is occasionally found in between my labia majora and labia minora... I do NOT have any STDs (I tested) and am assuming it's dried urine...

I want to get rid of this white stuff because it looks and smells bad as if I have STDs when I have oral sex. Is there any way to prevent getting this white stuff?

Thank you, a good guy seeker

Answer

Dear a good guy seeker,

The vagina normally secretes a clear or whitish substance to help cleanse itself and maintain a healthy environment. Changes in normal vaginal secretions (i.e., smell, texture, color, thickness, etc.) may indicate the presence of an infection. Some infections can be home treated; others need to be diagnosed and treated by a health care provider.

What you describe, however, sounds similar to the substance noticed by men with uncircumcised penises found under the foreskin: smegma. Smegma is a natural lubricating residue made up of shedded skin cells, skin oil secretions, and moisture, including sweat. Its cheesy like appearance can vary in color from almost white to a darker shade, depending on a person's skin tone. Smegma gathers in the nooks and crannies of the body's skin folds, including between the labia and around the clitoral hood. Because of male circumcision, it is more common among women than men.

What smegma is known for is its characteristic smell, which some people find arousing and others find unpleasant. If the build up of smegma is bothersome, it can be rinsed away easily with warm water. As the mucosal skin of the genitals is sensitive, avoid applying soap to the area.

Dried urine, especially on pubic hair, can also produce a distinctive scent. Carefully washing your pubic hair when showering/bathing and making sure to wipe well after each urination can help minimize urine odor.

If a regular warm water rinse between your labia does not produce enough of an improvement
in your aroma down there, you can consider seeing your primary care provider or gynecologist for a check-up.

Alice!
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