

***'Vaginas shouldn't be a mystery. I was worried about my own vagina. It needed a context of other vaginas - a community, a culture of vaginas. There's so much darkness and secrecy surrounding them- like the Bermuda Triangle.'* - Eve Ensler Producer/Creator of 'The Vagina Monologues.'**

### Vulval Facts

Each vulva is unique and will look slightly different.

The vulva is everything you can see and feel on the outside.

Approximately 50% are 'innies' and 50% are 'outies.' Innies means vulvas that are contained within the outer lips with no other protruding vulval parts. 'Outies' is when the inner lips may be slightly bigger than the outer lips so they protrude out a bit. Either is normal.

Pubic hair is important for protecting vulval skin and reducing the risk of friction, soreness, inflammation and infection.

Vulvas should be cleaned daily with water or water plus a mild soap.

### Vaginal Facts

The vaginal opening can be seen in the centre of the vulva. The vagina is the tube leading from that opening. It is where a tampon can be inserted during menstruation.

Vaginas are self-cleaning. They do not require additional cleaning. A simple rule to remember is to clean everything on the outside, but do not clean anything on the inside.

Vaginas contain numerous healthy bacteria that keep the vagina clean and produce 'stuff,' this stuff is vaginal discharge.

### Vulval and Vaginal Myths Busted

There is no 'correct' look to a vulva. It is about each person learning to love their normal. However, if someone is emotionally or physically troubled by their vulva they should seek medical advice from their local GP surgery or sexual health clinic.

Pubic hair is important and performs a function. It should only be removed in part or in full if it is what the person whose pubic hair it is, wants to remove it. Sometimes there are external influences on this decision, for example someone else telling a person that it's what they want/desire or something that a person has seen in media. If someone is concerned, they are experiencing pressure in a relationship, they could speak to a teacher, other trusted adult or an online service such as ChildLine.

Vaginal discharge is healthy and normal. A normal daily amount ranges from ½ to 1 teaspoon per day. It changes from cloudy to clear depending on the stage of the menstrual cycle. If a person's normal changes (a change in odour/colour/amount/associated pain) then they should seek help.

**Worried about anything you have seen or discussed today? Try this website to answer your questions or ask a trusted adult if you are still worried:**

Visit the childline website: <https://www.childline.org.uk>

NB: A change to normal discharge (amount, colour or odour), or any vulval soreness or pain during sexual intercourse can be a sign of infection. Anyone experiencing this should contact their GP surgery or local sexual health clinic if they are worried