

Vaginal Foreign Body Removal

Definition

- An object is stuck inside the vagina.

Health Information

Symptoms

- Some children will not have symptoms. They may simply tell someone they put something in their vagina. Most children have symptoms.
- **Pain.** Objects can cause pain in the vagina, lower belly, or when passing urine.
- **Discharge.** Objects can cause vaginal discharge. The discharge can smell. It's more common when the object is food, or it has been there for a few days. The discharge can cause itching.
- **Bleeding.** Rarely the object can cause bleeding. This is more common with sharp objects.

Causes

- Children sometimes put an object in their vagina. This is part of normal exploration of their body.
- Common objects are toilet paper, small toys, crayons, or beads.
- In teens, tampons are sometimes forgotten. They can also become stuck. If the object is a tampon, see the Vaginal Tampon Removal handout.
- Objects need to be removed to prevent infection and injury.

Urgency of Removal

- Sharp or painful objects need to be removed urgently.
- If the object is not causing symptoms, it can wait until office hours or the next day for removal. This will not cause any harm.
- Removing some objects may need a specialist (gynecologist).

Care Advice

1. Key Points

- Children can put small objects in their vagina.
- The vagina is a closed space. The object cannot get into the uterus or the belly.
- Most objects need a doctor's help for removal.
- Here is some home care advice that should help.

2. Object in Vagina - No Symptoms

- Objects that aren't causing symptoms can be removed during your doctor's regular office hours.
- Keep your child in underwear (or diapers). Discourage your child from pushing the object in deeper.
- Don't try to remove objects at home. Reason: removal could cause bleeding or pain.
- Your doctor may be able to remove the object in the office. Sometimes, your child may need to go to a specialist or the hospital for removal.

3. Pain Medicine

- For pain relief, give acetaminophen every 4 hours or ibuprofen every 6 hours as needed. (See Dosage table).

4. **Sitz Baths After Removal**

- After removal of the object, the vagina can feel irritated for a few days.
- If there is irritation, Sitz baths can soothe this.
- Soak the genital area in a basin or bathtub of warm water for 10 minutes.
- Add some baking soda to the water.
- Repeat this twice a day for 2 days if needed.

5. **What to Expect**

- Most often, objects in the vagina need to be removed by a doctor.
- Minor wounds in the vagina heal well. They don't cause scars or any long-term health problems.
- If you're worried the object could be related to sexual abuse, please talk to your doctor.

Call Your Doctor If

- Object is sharp
- Object causes symptoms, such as pain, bleeding, or discharge
- Fever occurs
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

Author: Barton Schmitt MD, FAAP and Julia Michie Bruckner, MD, MPH, FAAP

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