

Vaginal Tampon - How to Remove

Definition

- A tampon is stuck inside the vagina.

Health Information

Symptoms

- **Pain.** A stuck tampon can cause pain in the vagina, lower belly, or when passing urine.
- **Discharge.** Stuck tampons can cause vaginal discharge. The discharge can smell. It's more common when the tampon has been there for a few days.
- **Toxic shock syndrome.** If tampons stay in too long, there is a risk of a bacterial infection. This infection is called "toxic shock." Main symptoms are fever and rash. This is very rare.

Causes

- Tampons can become stuck or forgotten.
- The vagina is about 4 inches (10 cm) deep and 3 inches (7.5 cm) wide. It is muscular and stretchy. At the end of the vagina is the cervix (door to the uterus). The cervix is closed (unless you're pregnant). A tampon cannot get into the uterus or the belly.
- Tampons need to be removed to prevent infection.

Care Advice

1. Key Points

- It's important to remove stuck tampons.
- Tampons can often be safely removed at home.
- Here is some home care advice that should help.

2. Tampon - How to Remove

- Sit on toilet with knees apart or squat.
- Relax the vagina and bear down like you're pooping.
- Feel for the tampon. Grasp the string and pull it out slowly.
- If you can't find the string, run your finger around the inside of the vagina. Once found, grasp the tampon and pull it out.
- If this doesn't work, ask a trusted adult or friend to try.
- Don't use any tools or instruments to remove the tampon.

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 tampon, 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**

- Tampons may be able to be removed at home.
- If you can't get the tampon out, call your doctor for help.
- Minor wounds in the vagina heal well. They don't cause scars or any long-term health problems.

Call Your Doctor If

- The tampon cannot be removed at home
- Fever occurs
- You think your teen needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

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