

## 12 SECRETS OF FEMALE SEXUAL HEALTH ©

1. **RESPECT YOUR BODY AND YOUR MIND** – Communicate honestly with one another to protect both of you and avoid dangerous situations.
2. **LIMIT FAT INTAKE** – Goal no more than 30% of daily caloric intake from fat. High fat diets are associated with increased estrogen-receptor positive breast cancer.
3. **MAINTAIN A “HEALTHY” WEIGHT** – A body fat content greater than 22% is needed for estrogen production. 10-15% below normal weight can cause irregular cycles and interfere with fertility and calcium absorption. Have at least four milk servings a day.
3. **LIMIT ALCOHOL INTAKE** – Women have lower tolerance than men and the effects of alcohol are more intense before a woman has her period. 76% of convicted date rapists used alcohol to seduce their dates. Women who have two drinks a day increase their risk of breast cancer by 40-100%.
5. **DON'T SMOKE** – Toxic chemicals from cigarette smoke are found in cells at the opening of the uterus, the cervix, and in cervical fluid. Smoking increases the risk of human papilloma virus (HPV) infection that causes genital warts. Some of the viruses can cause cervical cancer especially in teens when cells are rapidly changing.
6. **EXERCISE, BUT DON'T OVERDO.** Women who do not exercise 2-3 hours a week double their risk of breast cancer. Always warm-up and cool down.
7. **EXAMINATIONS** – Do a self breast exam each month 4-5 days after your period. If you are 18 or sexually exposed, get a yearly pelvic exam. 75% of women with sexually transmitted diseases have no symptoms but the infections can cause infertility.
8. **CLOTHING CONCERNS** – Avoid tight jeans, nylon underwear, wet bathing suits, and moist exercise clothing. All increase the dampness of your vagina and provide the moisture that harmful germs need to multiply.
9. **CHEMICAL CONCERNS** – Avoid feminine hygiene sprays, and deodorant or scented tampons, pads, and panty liners. These can change the natural chemistry that protects you and increase your risk of irritation or infection. They may also cover up unpleasant odors that warn you of a vaginal infection.
10. **DOUCHING** – Don't unless told to by your health practitioner. The chemicals may irritate you, wash away your normal protection and lubrication, or spread a vaginal infection into your uterus. All increase your risk of pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), a major cause of infertility.
11. **TAMPONS CAN INCREASE INFECTION** – only use on heavy flow days. On light flow days tampons can dry out the vagina and scratch it - increasing the risk of infection. Change tampons every 3-4 hours so harmful germs do not have time to collect and grow.
12. **WIPE FROM FRONT TO BACK** when going to the bathroom to avoid transferring germs from the bowel movement to the urinary opening and the vagina.

This is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice, diagnoses or treatment, please consult your health care provider.