

## Douching

Douching can be performed after the vaginal packing is removed and once dilation has begun. We use an antimicrobial medication, Nidagel, for the first few weeks with dilation. Typically douching should not start until you have completed the course of Nidagel. Douching can be helpful as a rinse. This can help clean out the lubrication used for dilation, which can be irritating to some. It can also be helpful to re-set the vaginal flora or provide a more drying solution for symptom management. You may notice a different quality or color to the rinse as it comes out of the vaginal cavity from a yellowish-brownish discharge to sutures, sloughing skin or debris. Douching is also commonly used for symptom management (for example if you are having an uncomfortable amount of discharge or an abnormal smell).

### Douching solutions

Different douching solutions will provide different effects. Discuss with your TRS team what solutions you should be using to douche with.

### Solutions

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Water             | Water should not be used in the initial first few months after surgery. It can be absorbed rather than provide a rinse contributing to discharge. |
| Saline            | You can purchase sterile saline or make your own at home. Saline is a natural rinsing solution for your body.                                     |
| Vinegar Solution  | Mix the same amount of white vinegar with warm water. This solution can be drying and helpful when there is a lot of discharge.                   |
| Betadine solution | Mix the same amount of Betadine with warm water. This solution can also be drying and also provides antibacterial effects.                        |

There are two main different types of douche:

### The Bulb- Syringe Douche



This douche has two distinct parts: the bulb, which holds the fluid and the nozzle that allows you to insert the fluid into the vaginal canal. This kind of douche is limited in that it typically comes with a shorter nozzle and doesn't extend to the far end of the vaginal vault. It can also be trickier as it requires you to squeeze out the contents (vs. the control that a pump offers) and you can aspirate vaginal fluids back into the bulb



## The vaginal irrigation douche



This douche has three distinct parts: the bottle, the tubing and the nozzle. This method has the advantage of easier positioning for the douche and ability to irrigate with a steady flow of solution.



Step 1: Pour the solution you are using into the bottle

Step 2: Hook your 2<sup>nd</sup> and third fingers around the hooks around the top of the bottle and position your thumb on the top of the pump.

Step 3: Get into position – either squatting or standing, whatever is most comfortable for you. Insert the nozzle into your vagina and press your thumb down on the top of the pump over and over until all the solution is dispensed.

### **Instructions:**

Douching is easiest when done in the shower or empty bathtub.

Apply some petroleum jelly or lube to the tip of the nozzle.

Insert the tip of the nozzle as far as it will go into the vagina and gently squeeze the bulb or the dispenser until all the solution has been used.

Clean the tip of the nozzle with antibacterial soap after use.

### **Saline recipe:**

Add 1 cup (250 mL) distilled water to a clean container. If you use tap water, boil it first to sterilize it, and then let it cool until it is lukewarm.

Add ½ teaspoon (2.5 g) salt to the water.

Add ½ teaspoon (2.5 g) baking soda.

You can store homemade saline solution at room temperature for 3 days. Otherwise you can keep it in the fridge for several weeks.