
HOW TO DOUCHE

You should use douching equipment which uses a gravity feed method of getting liquid into the vagina. This consists of a rubber bag and tubing attached to a plastic nozzle. A bulb syringe should not be used because it is easy to squeeze it too hard and risk forcing liquid up into the uterus. Never use another woman's douche tip or nozzle, since vaginal infections can be transmitted this way.

1. Fill the douche bag with one or two quarts of lukewarm water to which one or two tablespoons of white vinegar have been added. Avoid using apple cider vinegar or wine vinegar because they both contain sugar and are produced by a fermentation process involving yeast. You could also use one or two quarts of an ingredient like a warm herbal solution.
2. Lie down on your back in the bathtub with knees up and legs apart. Some women prefer standing over the toilet or in the shower. The bag should be about one foot above the level of your hips. The higher the bag is, the higher the pressure of water rushing into the vagina. If it is too high, the water will flow too forcefully.
3. Spread the vaginal lips and wait until the air is out of the tubing and the solution starts running and then insert the nozzle about 1½ inches into the vagina, directing it upwards and back. By contracting the muscle at the vaginal opening, water can be held in the vagina. By relaxing the contraction, the water will run out. Or, you can close the lips of your vagina with your fingers and then allow them to separate. (This is called a retention douche.)
4. Rotate the nozzle to reach all areas of the vagina as the solution flows in and out. This process takes between five and ten minutes.
5. After douching, wash the nozzle with soap and hot water. Make sure your equipment is thoroughly dry before storing it.
6. If you are pregnant, don't douche.

If you ever experience abdominal pain, possibly with fever, because the douching forced liquid into the uterus, see a doctor that same day. This doesn't happen often, but it is possible.

ALTERNATIVES TO DOUCHING

Some remedies can be poured into a few inches of bathwater. Then you can sit with your knees apart; open your vagina slightly by inserting one or two fingers and pulling down slightly to let the water run in. You can also use your finger to try to wash out the discharge and bathe your vagina with the herbal bath water. Don't rub too hard because you can irritate yourself.