

Foreskin hygiene

The normal foreskin in infants and children does not need special care and should not be forcibly retracted for cleaning from birth to 5 years of age. As a rule the foreskin will retract when it is ready and it should only be retracted by its owner.

Why is foreskin hygiene important?

If you have a foreskin, you owe it to yourself to practise correct hygiene because failure to do this can result in an unpleasant smell, soreness, irritation and infection. Poor hygiene is associated with a greater risk of getting cancer of the penis and possibly with sexually transmitted diseases. A man who neglects his foreskin may end up with a smelly and sore penis that could affect his sex life, for it will be obvious to his partner.

It is important to retract the foreskin and wash all of the area at least once a week. All males should practise proper hygiene from the age of 6 or 7.

Foreskin hygiene is very simple!

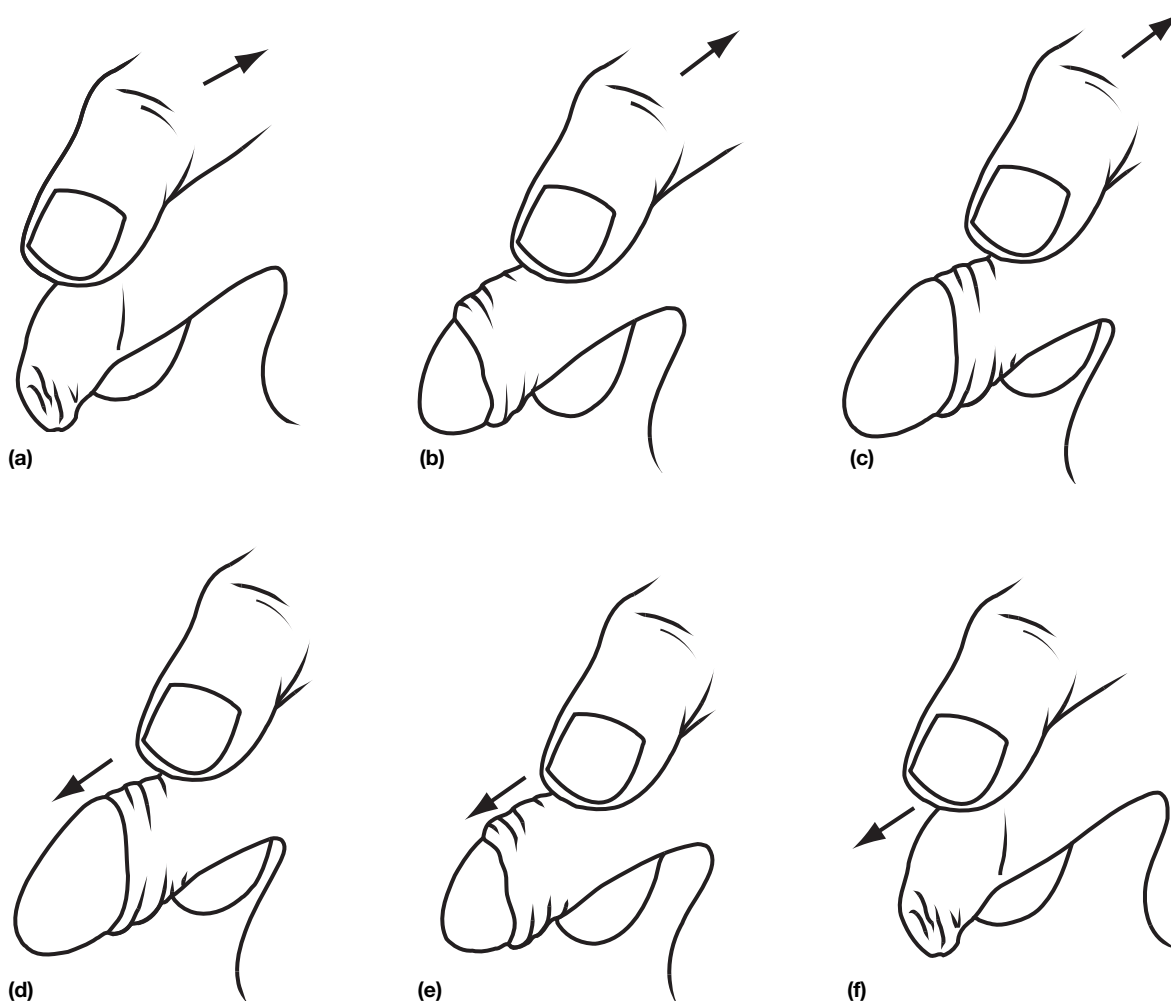
When you have your shower or bath, follow these steps:

1. Slide your foreskin back towards your body (diagrams (a) to (c)). A male older than 5 years should be able to slide his foreskin back. If you cannot, check with your doctor.
2. Wash the end of your penis and foreskin with soap and water. (Do not let soap get in the opening—it stings!)
3. After your shower or bath, *dry* the end of your penis and foreskin properly and *replace* the foreskin (diagrams (d) to (f)).

Do not forget to replace the foreskin, or it could get trapped back and cause unpleasant problems.

Also, when you urinate, slide the foreskin back just enough so that the urine does not get on the foreskin—this helps to keep it clean.

Do not forget—if you have any problems, see your doctor.



Cleaning the foreskin