

How delighted I am to introduce you to a woman who has learned that, "if it itches 'Down There'.....it's not always yeast!". Meet "Mrs. M". She has made the journey from being painfully clean to naturally comfortable. As you can tell, she is one of your "sisters" who entrusts her female care to me. She is concerned about you. She was willing to share her experience with you. She does not want you to suffer as she did for so many years. Many of you, through the years, have experienced similar discomforts and have needed to learn the basics of feminine hygiene. I thank her for taking the time from her busy schedule to share her journey with us. Arlene

Natural Hygiene

By S. Moore

Growing up, I was taught that good little girls wash themselves, everywhere. The bath/shower was a place where I lathered up, head to toe and made sure every inch of me got clean, literally. When I would get a "yeast infection", and the vaginal itching, pain or odor would worsen, the more I would wash. After I became sexually active, the intensity and frequency of my washing increased and so did the discomfort. I have also always loved to escape to the YMCA, finish my exercise and then spend time sitting in the hot tub with only the sound of the bubbling of the hot water. These activities had become a regular part of my routine.

Imagine my surprise, after 20+ years of recurring yeast infections, when Arlene told me that I didn't have yeast infections after all. I argued with her that doctors had told me for years that I was just going to have to deal with itching, odor and discomfort, and could offer no reason why I was getting them so frequently. I had kept a fluconazole prescription perpetually filled for many, many years.

Arlene smiled, in that way she does, and proceeded to educate me, in that way she does.

I was given two, very simple pieces of advice from her on these topics: First, she said that "*only chicken should go in boiling water*" (not delicate feminine skin). Secondly, she told me to "*only shampoo the carpet*", that the delicate, feminine areas should only be washed with water, never soap.

This advice baffled me, but I realized that it couldn't hurt to try. In the months since I took Arlene's advice, I have not had ANY of the old symptoms—can you believe it? I recently came across that prescription for yeast infections that once upon a time sat on the nightstand beside my bed. It was in the bottom of a basket and hadn't seen daylight in months! I have discovered the dry sauna and reap the same benefits as the hot tub. I use a squeeze bottle filled with lukewarm water to "wash" in between showers if I feel it's needed, and I've gotten used to the natural smell and light discharge that a woman SHOULD have instead of trying to wash it away or cover it up.

I never thought I'd be writing about this topic, but when I told Arlene, with tears in my eyes at my last visit, that my life has been truly changed with this little bit of knowledge, she asked me if I would write about this to inform others. Sometimes it really is the unexpected that changes our lives. I am and will forever be thankful to Arlene for enlightening me and teaching me to count on my own body to take care of itself.