

Penis Discharge

Discharge from the penis is usually a sign of infection. Some of these can be serious. Some may cause problems later in life if they are not treated.

If you are concerned about any discharge from the penis or have some other concern about your health, you should see your doctor, family planning clinic or sexual health clinic.

Practical Advice

In the male, the urethra is the narrow small tube that passes from the bladder through the penis, allowing for the passage of urine. Ejaculate fluid ("cum") passes through the urethra before and during ejaculation. This ejaculate fluid contains sperm produced in the testes, seminal fluid produced in glands near the prostate, and prostatic fluid produced in the prostate.

There are small glands in the surface of the head of the penis which produce a cheesy white material (called smegma). This may accumulate under the foreskin in males who have not been circumcised. This is normal.

Any other discharge from the penis is unusual, except the clear fluid that may drip from the penis when sexually excited ('pre-cum'). Some young men seem to produce a lot of this fluid. Discharge from the penis at any other time (ie. when not sexually excited) is usually a sign of infection.

Causes of discharge from the penis include:

- Urethritis
- Gonorrhoea
- Chlamydia
- Non-specific urethritis
- Acute prostatitis
- Infection under the foreskin of males who have not been circumcised
- Warts at the opening of the urethra
- Herpes simplex virus ulcer at the opening of the urethra
- Something inserted into the urethra.

Other resources:

- [Queensland Health Sexual Health website](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/topics/sexual-health) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/topics/sexual-health>)

Related Content

- [Gonorrhoea](#) (/HealthConditions/2/Infections-Parasites/138/Sexually-Transmitted-Diseases/256/Gonorrhoea) fact sheet
- [Chlamydia](#) (/HealthConditions/2/Infections-Parasites/138/Sexually-Transmitted-Diseases/130/Chlamydia) fact sheet

Health Insite:

[Penis problems](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/penis-problems) (<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/penis-problems>)