



Labial Hypertrophy and Asymmetry

What are labial hypertrophy and labial asymmetry?

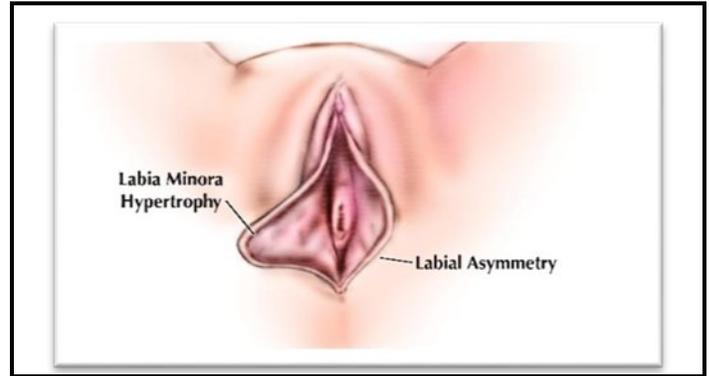
Labial hypertrophy is an increase in the size of one or both of the “lips” of the vagina, called the labia. Labial hypertrophy can affect the inner labia, known as the labia minora, or the outer labia, called the labia majora. When only one side of the labia is enlarged, the condition is referred to as labial asymmetry. There is no definition of “normal” labia size, but sometimes the labia minora or majora are larger than another persons or larger on one side.

What causes labial hypertrophy?

Labia come in all different shapes and sizes and all are completely normal. The reason why some people have larger labia than others is unknown. Sometimes labia have been enlarged since birth, but many times a person may first notice an increase in size of their labia during puberty.

What are the symptoms of labial hypertrophy?

Usually labial hypertrophy causes no problems or symptoms. Some people may develop irritation or pain when wearing underwear or tight-fitting clothing. Labial hypertrophy may interfere with exercise or certain activities that put pressure on the pubic area, such as horseback riding, bike riding, or sexual activity. Rarely, people with frequent irritation can develop an infection of the labia or vulva, which should be treated by a healthcare provider.



How is labial hypertrophy or asymmetry treated?

It is important to remember that your body is healthy and normal no matter the size of your labia. Everyone should practice good hygiene, washing their genitalia once per day with mild, scent-free, color-free, chemical-free soap. If you have labial hypertrophy, you may consider avoiding wearing tight underwear and clothing, and during your period, you might use chemical-free sanitary pads to prevent irritation or try tampons, menstrual underwear or the menstrual cup. Over the counter topical mild ointments can be used to prevent irritation.

If you have pain that continues, irritation or infections, talk to your provider about other options. Labioplasty, an operation to remove excess labial tissue, is reserved for patients with persistent pain that limits their normal activities. Risks include bleeding, infection, wound healing problems, and persistent pain

Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about all the risks of surgery and to have all your questions answered.

What should you do if you are worried about your labia?

Some people with labial hypertrophy may feel worried about the appearance of their labia. They may be embarrassed to wear bathing suits or tight clothing in front of others, and they may be self-conscious during sexual activity. If you have ever felt this way, it is important to mention it to your healthcare provider.

How can your healthcare provider help?

If you have concerns about the appearance of your labia, or if you are experiencing pain or irritation, it is important to be examined by your healthcare provider. They can do a careful exam to make sure everything is healthy and talk to you about your concerns.

Resources:

If you are curious about the wide variety of normal labia, check out these online resources. You should know that they contain a lot of images of normal labia.

<http://ilovemypetals.com>

<http://www.greatwallofvagina.co.uk/home>