Labial Adhesions

Labial adhesions occur from irritation of the inner "lips" covering a girl’s vaginal opening. They most often occur in children who are not potty trained and are still wearing diapers. The inner "lips" become stuck together. The medical word for this is "adhesion." An adhesion may be small or may almost completely cover the vaginal opening. They are not usually painful. An adhesion can be very thin and may separate with pulling on the inner vaginal lips. An adhesion can be thicker and require treatment.

Treatment:

1. Apply a thin line of estrogen cream prescribed by your child’s doctor directly on the adhesion. It is helpful to use a Q-tip® so the cream does not get on any other area of the child’s private parts. Use the cream twice a day. Your child’s doctor will recommend that it be used for 2 weeks to 4 weeks.

2. An adhesion may need to be treated longer. If it is not completely open after you finish the medication treatment, call your child’s doctor for more instructions.

3. The cream can sometimes cause a thickening of the tissues around the vaginal opening or a slight whitish or clear discharge around the vagina. This will go away after medication treatment is finished.

4. If the adhesion has not separated after a month of treatment, your child may be referred to a specialist in pediatric gynecology.

5. When the adhesion has separated, it is helpful after cleansing the area to apply a small amount of lubricating jelly or ointment to the area where the adhesion was until your child is out of diapers. This will keep it from sticking together again. Vaseline® or A and D® ointment works very well. You should apply it at bed time.

If you have questions or concerns, call your child’s doctor or the Children’s Mercy Hospital Information Line at (816) 234-3188.