



## #GreatRSE : Body Fluids

This activity is taken from **Great Relationships and Sex Education: 200+ activities for educators working with young people** by Alice Hoyle & Ester McGeeney. RRP £34.99.

The activity below is taken from the chapter on Bodies.

### Body fluids

**Summary:** Using 'homemade' samples of bodily fluids this interactive activity helps participants to understand what different bodily fluids look like, what is normal and healthy and when to seek help. This is rarely covered in RSE leading to a lack of knowledge, in particular about how vaginal fluid and discharge changes throughout the menstrual cycle.

**Time:** 20–30 minutes

**Resources:** Pre-prepared petri dishes with a range of fluid types as outlined in the following. Tape up petri dishes so participants can't smell or touch them. Fluid labels or cards. Underwear and menstrual pads (optional).

**Age:** 11+

**Preparation** Using the ingredients listed in Table 5.2, create a range of bodily fluids. Put one–two teaspoons of each fluid in a sealed petri dish and add 'smell' labels as instructed. Number each petri dish clearly. This can be time consuming and is a great activity to ask peer educators/young volunteers to help you prepare as it can be good, messy, educational fun!

**Facilitation** Place the petri dishes on a table and ask participants to gather round. Encourage participants to look at each dish in turn and describe what it is they can see. Give participants a set of labels or cards, each containing a name of a bodily fluid. Their task is to match each dish to a bodily fluid.

Reveal the correct answers and discuss why and when each bodily fluid may be visible and what this can tell us about our bodies, using the information in Table 5.2.

Emphasise to participants that if a fluid is not smelly or causing irritation it's likely that it's entirely normal. As you go through each fluid you may want to demonstrate how it appears in the gusset of underwear or on a disposable menstrual pad. Make sure you remind participants that pads don't need to be worn all the time as most fluids (except menstrual blood) will be absorbed by underwear.

Some young people may find this demonstration disgusting but there is also high potential for them being privately reassured that their leaky bodies are normal.

TABLE 5.2 Information for educators on bodily fluids and the ingredients required for the activity

<i>Fluid</i>	<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Information</i>
Cervical mucus	Egg white for fertile stretchy cervical mucus produced around ovulation (5–10ml).	Produced around ovulation. Normally stretchy and stringy and looks like egg white.
Normal vaginal fluid	Small amount of watered down milk for entirely normal milky discharge pre or post ovulation.	Produced throughout the month as a way of the vagina self cleaning. Can be milky thin liquid. The vagina is naturally acidic which helps good bacteria to thrive and keeps harmful bacteria in check.
Vaginal lubricant	Watered down water-based lube for clear discharge produced by vagina on arousal.	Produced on arousal. Clear slippery fluid.
Pre-cum	Watered down water-based lube for clear discharge produced by penis on arousal.	Clear liquid produced by the tip of the penis when aroused.
Semen	Translucent whitish hair conditioner for sperm (3–5ml).	Produced by the testicles and exits the tip of the penis; contains sperm. Semen is naturally alkaline.
Period/ menstruation	Watered down red food colouring, seedless strawberry jam (clots), a bit of soy sauce (brownish colour at different stages). The average is approximately two–six tablespoons of blood and tissue, and the colour and consistency can vary throughout a period. You could provide these on different petri dishes to show beginning, middle and end of a period.	Produced during menstruation.
Yeast infection (Thrush)	Watered down cottage cheese to indicate possible yeast infection (Thrush) labelled with 'can smell yeasty'.	Infection of the vaginal canal. Caused by yeast organism <i>Candida albicans</i> can cause a thick cream coloured itchy discharge.
Trichomonas vaginalis	Small amount of green washing up liquid in water to create foamy pale greenish tinged discharge (trichomonas vaginalis infection) labelled with 'can smell very unpleasant'.	Infection of the vaginal canal. Caused by parasite <i>Trichomonas vaginalis</i> . Can cause a pale greenish tinged frothy foul smelling discharge.
Bacterial vaginosis	Excess of small amount of thin flour and water paste, perhaps with small amount of black pepper to give a greyish tinges for possible bacterial vaginosis infection. Labelled with 'can smell unpleasant (fishy)'.	Infection of the vaginal canal. Caused by overgrowth of bacteria often when the acidic pH balance has been upset, can cause a grey fishy smelling discharge.