

## A Few Things Women Should Know About Penises

The average male human has about a eleven erections each day. 4-5 erections occur during REM sleep. There are about 8 billion people on earth.  $8B/2=4$  billion male humans.  $4B \times 11 = 44$  billion human erections per day on earth. That's more than 500 thousand every second. Don't be shocked when you see one. They are common and harmless. They are happening all

around you, 24/7, and virtually none of them are about you. Male mammals cannot control their erections. Erections are under the involuntary control of the parasympathetic nervous system, not the cerebral cortex. Male humans learn this through personal embarrassment.

Penises are cleaner than hands. There are 2 sterile liquids that exit from the penis: urine and semen. Urine does contain non-infectious bacteria that grow only in the bladder, but they are only detected by methods developed in 2014. Because these bacteria do not live outside of the bladder, urine is not infectious and it is safe to flush a wound with, or drink, urine from a healthy person. Sperm in semen can impregnate, but not infect. So semen too is sterile. While urine is not infectious, it does contain waste products we are normally better off without. Semen, however, contains nutrients for sperm (including fructose, amino acids, enzymes, phosphorylcholine, citric acid, potassium, zinc, and prostaglandins), and is mildly beneficial when swallowed. Personally, I wash my hands before I pee.

How to get along with a penis when in doubt: If it's limp, play with it. If it's erect, stroke it constantly. It's much more difficult to start blood flow into a flaccid penis, than to keep it flowing in an erect penis. You can stroke a penis with bare skin, its own skin, or with a lubricant, inter alia.

If the penis is erect, the testes will usually be up close to the body. You may pat the scrotum gently. Don't squeeze testicals. Testes are very sensitive to pressure. If down, they can be felt very carefully. Don't pull them down. Body temperature and ambient temperature control contraction of the cremaster muscle in the spermatic cord that raises and lowers testes.



**Figure 1** Four views of an erect penis. Left to right: ventral view showing ridge of spongiosum; two lateral views showing superficial veins and the glans esp. the corona (edge); and on the right, the superficial dorsal vein and the marked color change where the foreskin has been removed.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Penis\\_anatomy.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Penis_anatomy.jpg)

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The penile meatus is merely the opening of the urethra. The male urethra is just a long tube that collapses as it empties. It doesn't slam shut along the full length of the urethra all at once, a few droplets remain after we're done urinating or ejaculating. Gradually, the remainder of the urethra closes, and gravity pulls the remaining droplets to the meatus. So no matter how much we men shake and dance, the last few drops go down our pants.

The love muscle actually does contain quite a bit of muscle, and it is usually under contraction (flexed), which squeezes blood out of the penis. Erection requires relaxation of smooth muscle around penile arteries and within the corpora cavernosa. The neurotransmitter that causes smooth muscle to relax is nitric oxide (NO). Control is complex and involuntary. The penis is designed to be self-collapsing.

The corpus spongiosum is erectile<sup>1</sup> tissue that surrounds the urethra on the ventral side of the penis. The corpora cavernosa are the paired erectile tissue columns that expand, raise, and stiffen the penis. The superficial dorsal vein is usually visible on the dorsal side of the penis.

The male glans penis is often called the tip or head of the penis. It grows from the same embryonic tissue that forms the female glans clitoris. The penis has fewer nerves than the clitoris, and they are spread out over a larger area. The entire penis is exposed to external stimulation, whereas the clitoris is completely protected. Try to imagine what that does to the penis owner.

Female mammals have a glans clitoris, corpus spongiosum (in labia minora), and corpora cavernosa attaching the glans to the (ischio)pubic ramus of the pelvis. Homologous tissues include the scrotum & labia majora, and the testes & ovaries.

An erect penis can be broken by bending or twisting it too far when erect, thereby rupturing the tunica albuginea or Buck's fascia which enclose the corpora cavernosa. This causes a painful bend in the penis called Peyronie's disease. This is a permanent injury which can be repaired with surgery, but not quite completely restored to its original condition like a broken bone.

Young penises may need to ejaculate more than once each day. Excess semen (with sperm) is stored in the seminal vesicles adjacent to the prostate gland. Researchers think that the vesicles hold an average of three days production of semen, and that men think more about sex when their vesicles are full. Semen that is not ejaculated overflows the vesicles and is expelled in urine.

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<sup>1</sup> Erectile tissues, by definition, expand and fill with blood during sexual excitation.