

Name: Ilori Modupefoluwa Naomi

Department: Human Anatomy

Matric Number: 18/mhs03/005

Course Code: Ana 212

Course Title: Gross Anatomy of the Pelvic and Perineum

Question: With the aid of a diagram, discuss the gross anatomy of the female external genitalia.

The vulva is the external genitalia of the female reproductive tract, situated immediately external to the genital orifice. The vulva consists of the external genital organs of the female mammal. As the outer portal of the human uterus, the vulva protects its opening with the labia majora and the labia minora. The vulva also contains the opening of the female urethra, and thus serves the vital function of passing urine. The major structures of the vulva are; the mons pubis, the labia majora and the labia minora, the external portion of the clitoris and the clitoral hood, the vulval vestibule the pudendal cleft, the frenulum labiorum pudendi or fourchette, the opening (or urinary meatus) of the urethra, the opening (or introitus) of the vagina and the hymen. The soft mound at the front of the vulva, the mons pubis, is formed by fatty tissue covering the pubic bone. The mons pubis separates into two folds of skin called the labia majora, the cleft between the labia majora is called the pudendal cleft, and it contains and protects the other, more delicate structures of the vulva. The labia majora meet again at the perineum, a flat area between the pudendal cleft and the anus.

The clitoris is located at the front of the vulva where the labia minora meet. The visible portion of the clitoris is the clitoral glans, roughly the size and shape of a pea. The clitoral glans is highly sensitive, containing as many nerve endings as the analogous organ in males, the glans penis. The point where the labia minora attach to the clitoris is called the frenulum clitoridis. A prepuce, the clitoral hood, normally covers and protects the clitoris.

The area between the labia minora is called the vulval vestibule, and it contains the vaginal and urethral openings. The urethral opening (meatus) is located below the clitoris and just in front of the vagina. This is where urine passes from the urinary bladder.

The opening of the vagina is located at the bottom of the vulval vestibule toward the perineum which is sometimes partly covered by a membrane called the hymen. The hymen will rupture during the first episode of vigorous sex, and the blood produced by this rupture has been traditionally seen as a sign of virginity. However, the hymen may also rupture spontaneously during exercise or be stretched by normal activities such as use of tampons.

