

NAME: YONREN NITA ORITSESEUDEDE

MATRIC NO: 18/MHS02/197

COURSE: PHS 212

FACTORS FACILITATING THE MOVEMENT OF SPERM IN THE FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE TRACT

Sperm transport within the female reproductive tract is a cooperative effort between the functional properties of the sperm and seminal fluid on the one hand and cyclic adaptations of the **female reproductive tract that facilitate the transport of sperm** toward the ovulated egg. Sperm transport in the female reproductive system involves the penetration by the sperm of various barriers along their way toward the egg. During coitus in the human, semen is deposited in the upper vagina close to the cervix. The normal environment of the vagina is inhospitable to the survival of sperm, principally because of its low pH (<5.0). The low pH of the vagina is a protective mechanism for the woman against many sexually transmitted pathogens, because no tissue barrier exists between the vagina outside and the peritoneal cavity inside. The acidic pH of the vagina is bacteriocidal and is the reflection of an unusual functional adaptation of the vaginal epithelium. Alone among the stratified

squamous epithelia in the body, the cells of the vaginal lining contain large amounts of glycogen. Anaerobic lactobacilli within the vagina break down the glycogen from shed vaginal epithelial cells, with the production of lactic acid as a byproduct. The lactic acid is responsible for the lowered vaginal pH.