

Introduction

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Often considered (with the urinary tract) as part of the urogenital system, this includes: male reproductive organs producing and emitting sperm; female reproductive organs where ova are produced, fertilized, and develop into embryos and fetuses; and mammary glands.

Male genitals These include two sperm-producing testes suspended in a sac (the scrotum). Spermatozoa produced by tubules in the testes mature in ducts (the epididymides) and travel through two tubes (the vas deferens) into the pelvic cavity. There, seminal fluid from the seminal vesicles and prostate gland mixes with spermatozoa before these are ejected through the penis via a tube, the urethra.

External female genitals Located below and in front of the pubic arch, these include the mons pubis (a rounded eminence of fatty tissue); labia majora and labia minora (skin folds bounding the cleft into which open the urethra and vagina); clitoris (a small erectile homologue of the penis); vestibule of the vagina; bulb of the vestibule; and greater vestibular glands. These collectively make up the so-called vulva or pudendum.

Internal female genitals These lie inside the pelvis. They include the vagina (a canal), uterus (womb), and two uterine (Fallopian) tubes, each leading to an ovary. Ova produced in the ovaries travel through the tubes to the uterus. A fertilized ovum implanted in the uterine wall develops into a fetus nourished by a placenta. At birth the vagina serves as birth canal.

Mammary glands (breasts) in adult females are large, milk-secreting glands comprising gland tissue, fibrous tissue, and fatty tissue. They project from the front and sides of the chest.

Related topics This section includes items on menstruation, contraception, conception, development of embryo and fetus, pregnancy, and birth.