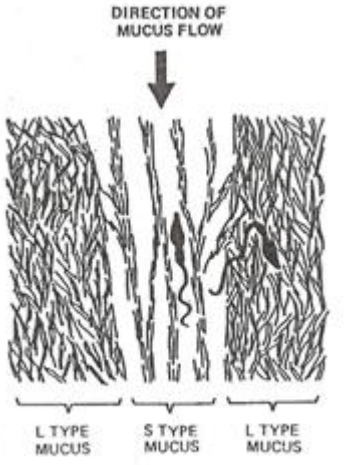
A Note About S Mucus

S Mucus (oestrogenic)

S Mucus (Fig. 11-13) from the S crypts in the upper half of the cervix appears 1-3 days later then the L mucus. The higher levels of oestrogen stimulate its production. The S mucus is fluid and when it reaches the same amount as the L mucus, the woman notices a change in the character of mucus to a wet–slippery sensation at the vulva that remains until peak day. After one or two days, the oestrogen reaches a maximum level, as also does the S mucus.[2] The S mucus transports and nourishes sperm. S mucus is very fluid and it forms swimming lanes in which sperm cells move along the cervical canal very rapidly, reaching the S crypts in the cervix in 3-10 minutes.[3,7] Both L and S mucus cooperate to bring about an optimal sperm propagation to a crypt.



L-type mucus capturing defective sperm

The **qualities of more-fertile mucus** – clear, stretchy, spinnbarkeit, associated with a sensation of wetness, slipperiness or lubrication are due to the combined effects of L, S and P mucus. S mucus nourishes sperm in the crypts.[1] Sperm can survive in the oestrogenic **more-fertile** mucus for up to five days.

<< Fig. 11-13; Structure of S Mucus: Diagram of sperm swimming up the cervical canal in the swimming lanes of S mucus. The L mucus acts as a filter for defective sperm.

S crypts and pre-menopause (ageing of the cervix):

The cervix ages naturally from birth to post-menopause. At **puberty** S crypts are very numerous but with increasing age L crypts replace S crypts.[6] In the **pre-menopause** the decrease in number of S crypts results in a decrease in the number of days of more-fertile mucus. **NOTE:** When the **cervix has aged**, a woman may ovulate but yet produce **no** cervical mucus. Since the mucus is essential for sperm entry, even though the woman may have a biphasic temperature, such women are said to have **non-fertile ovulations**.[1] Pregnancy stimulates the production of S crypts and rejuvenates the cervix by two to three years.[6]

S crypts and hormonal contraception (the 'Pill'):

Oral contraceptives double the functional rate of aging of the cervix.[6] "After three and up to fifteen months of contraceptive use, there is a greater loss of the S crypt cells than can be replaced".[5]

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