

What You Should Know About Menopause and Vaginal Dryness?

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INTRODUCTION

The end of a woman's menstrual periods is known as menopause. A formerly menstrual woman is said to be in menopause after 12 months without a period. In the United States, this often occurs around the age of 51, but it can also occur in your 40s or 50s. During menopause, the body undergoes considerable hormonal changes. Estrogen and progesterone levels, in particular, fall. Vaginal dryness is one of the symptoms that might result from this [1].

When it comes to Menopause, What is Vaginal Dryness?

A thin layer of wetness coats the vaginal walls in most cases. The cells of the vaginal walls secrete this moisture, which aids sperm survival and movement. It also diminishes arousal during sexual activity. Vaginal secretions and moisture decrease as oestrogen production declines in menopause, and vaginal dryness may develop. Vaginal dryness can cause discomfort, burning, or itching, as well as decreased sex drive, post-sex bleeding, and recurrent urinary tract infections. Painful intercourse and it can negatively affect quality of life [2].

Why do Women have Vaginal Dryness During and after Menopause?

Changes in hormone production lead the vaginal walls to weaken, resulting in vaginal dryness during and after menopause. As a result, fewer cells produce moisture, resulting in vaginal dryness. The most prevalent reason of vaginal dryness is low oestrogen levels, which is linked to menopause. Vaginal dryness can occur even before menopause in some women with vaginas, and this can be caused by a variety of factors. Other factors that may contribute to or cause vaginal dryness are:

- Cigarette smoking
- Depression
- High stress levels
- Immune system disorders
- Some cancer treatment

What Medical Treatments are Available for Menopausal Vaginal Dryness?

Menopause-related vaginal dryness can be uncomfortable and even painful, but there are over-the-counter and prescription treatments

available. The following medical treatments may be prescribed for you:

Estrogen therapy in the vaginal area:

- **Estradiol vaginal ring:** an estrogen-containing ring that is placed in the vaginal canal for 90 days at a time
- **Vaginal estradiol pills**
- **Estrogen cream** applied to or placed in the vagina
- **Ospemifene:** This drug is an oestrogen agonist/antagonist for vaginal atrophy and is taken as an oral tablet.
- **Estrogen therapy in standard doses:** This sort of oestrogen therapy is sometimes used in conjunction with vaginal creams.
- **Dehydroepiandrosterone:** is a kind of dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA). DHEA is a hormone that is injected into the vaginal canal to aid in the treatment of painful intercourse.

Consult your gynaecologist or other healthcare provider to see whether any of these therapies are right for you. Before taking anything, speak with your oncologist if you have a history of certain cancers [3].

Is there anything you can do at Home to Help with Menopausal Vaginal Dryness?

Vaginal dryness can be caused by vaginal atrophy. If this is the situation for you, you could try some natural therapies, such as:

- Herbs and supplements
- Diet
- Exercise

For More about Natural Treatments for Vaginal Atrophy

There are also over-the-counter personal lubricants that you might try, like Astroglide or Replens. Natural oils like almond oil or coconut oil may also provide some relief. Regular sexual stimulation helps encourage vaginal blood flow and secretions. You can do this with a partner or by yourself [4].

Before using any home remedies for vaginal dryness, talk with your doctor or healthcare professional. Ask them if the remedy is safe to use or if there are any known adverse effects. Products that are all-natural or herbal are not necessarily safe to use, particularly in the genital area.

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