



Genitourinary Syndrome of Menopause (GSM)

Chemotherapy and hormonal therapies used to treat cancer can result in loss of estrogen production. Indeed, this is the goal of treatment for hormone sensitive cancers such as with breast cancer. Estrogen, the primary female sex hormone, helps to provide and maintain the thickness and elasticity of the vaginal tissue.

Menopause, whether naturally occurring or caused by cancer treatment, occurs when the ovaries have stopped producing the majority of estrogen. As estrogen levels drop, the vaginal tissues become dry, thin and lose the ability to stretch.

These changes can lead to vaginal dryness and pain with sexual intercourse. Urinary frequency and recurrent bladder infections may also occur.

Vaginal lubricants and moisturizers can be purchased over-the-counter. These products do not contain hormones and should not have side effects.

Treatment options for vaginal dryness and pain with intercourse:

First make sure to eliminate irritants – this includes feminine washes, alcohol-based wipes, topical therapies or washes containing artificial fragrances, parabens, petroleum or propylene glycol.

Non-Hormonal Treatments (OTC):

Vaginal moisturizers (should be used 2-3 days per week, long term):

- Replens Long-Lasting Vaginal Moisturizer
- RepHresh Vaginal gel
- Luvena
- HyaloGyn Vaginal Hydrating Gel
- Coconut Oil
- Revaree Vaginal Moisturizer

Vaginal lubricants (should be applied prior to/during sexual activity):

Note - Oil based lubricants such as petroleum jelly, baby or mineral oil may damage latex condoms and diaphragms.

- Astroglide (water based)
- Slippery Stuff (water based)
- K-Y Jelly (water based)
- Pjur (silicone based)
- ID Millennium (silicone based)
- H2O Sliquid Naturals (water based)
- Ah! Yes Lubricant (water based)
- Uber Lube (silicone based)

Hormonal Treatments - Talk to your doctor. If appropriate, commonly prescribed vaginal insert options include: Imvexxy 4 mcg, Vagifem 10 mcg or Intrarosa 6.5 mg.