

Painful Sexual Intercourse - Dyspareunia

Trevor A. Wing MBRCF FRCHM, MBACC, BSc, MSc, DMed

Overview

Dyspareunia is described as pain during or directly after sexual intercourse. It can have many causes and a careful differential diagnosis is needed to identify the cause which is often different in each case. Dyspareunia can happen at any time in a woman's reproductive life but is most common later in reproductive life and menopause.

Possible Causes

Any of the genital parts can cause pain during sex. Some conditions affect the skin around the vaginal entrance, some cause muscle spasm at the vaginal entrance, In some cases the cause is post-operative damage and healing (post-partum, post abdominal surgery, post sterilisation). Some women have a bacterial, viral or yeast infection causing intercourse pain. In many cases the cause is unknown and conventional medicine is unable to offer treatment. The pain from these conditions is usually felt when a tampon or penis is inserted into the vagina. Sometimes just sitting down can cause discomfort.

The causes can be wide and varied. Vaginismus (spasm of the muscles around the vagina), Vulvitis (inflammation of the vulva tissue), vulvar vestibulitis (inflammation of the vulvar vestibule) are all causes of superficial (vaginal entrance) dyspareunia. Deep dyspareunia is felt not at the vaginal entrance, but deep in the lower abdomen usually with thrusting during sexual intercourse. This type of dyspareunia is usually caused by internal reproductive organ conditions also because the bladder and intestines are close to the vagina, they can refer pain during sex. In some cases of dyspareunia an allergic or intolerant reaction to foods or substances can be a contributing factor.

Conventional Medicine Treatment

If the cause can be identified as anatomical then surgery is used to correct the cause. If the cause is physiological then often hormones and hormone antagonists are used and if the cause is neurological then Amitriptyline has been shown to help.



Natural Medicine Treatment

When anatomical causes are ruled out acupuncture and herbal medicine often bring good relief. There is a psychological element in Dyspareunia and vaginal exercises can help “retrain” the mind to be more ready for and accept intercourse. We find the combination of all three treatments together with topical naturopathic vagina creams and gels gives the best results.

Our Female Healthcare Philosophy

At the Women's Natural Health Clinic, we specialise in providing comprehensive natural reproductive, gynaecological, obstetric and general healthcare for females from adolescence to post-menopause. Our approach is to integrate techniques in both oriental and western medical diagnosis to formulate a naturally oriented treatment plan combining acupuncture, herbal medicine, nutritional therapy, exercise and lifestyle. Each treatment plan is tailored specifically to each individual woman maximizing results.

Please email us at enquiries@naturalgynae.com with questions, we are more than happy to provide any information via email that will assist you in deciding which treatment approach would be best for you

For more information, contact details and appointments click here www.naturalgynae.com