

Vaginal estradiol tablets outperform moisturizers when treating vulvovaginal problems

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Sex shouldn't hurt at any age, yet 75% of postmenopausal women report vaginal dryness, and up to 40% report pain with intercourse. A new study reports that vaginal estradiol tablets just might be what's needed to relieve vulvovaginal problems and improve overall quality of life. Study results are published online today in *Menopause*, the journal of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS).

Moderate to severe vulvovaginal symptoms in [postmenopausal women](#) are associated with significant decreases in sexual functioning and quality of life. Although there are a number of treatment options available, not all of them have been put to the test and have been documented to work. In the article "Effects of vaginal estradiol tablets and [moisturizer](#) on menopause-specific quality of life and mood in healthy postmenopausal women with vaginal symptoms: a randomized clinical trial," results of a double-blind, placebo-controlled study compared the effectiveness of vaginal estradiol tablets and vaginal moisturizers.

With more than 300 postmenopausal women participating in the study, it was shown that low-dose vaginal estradiol tablets greatly improved quality-of-life scores compared with dual placebo. Treatment with vaginal moisturizers, in contrast, did not yield any more improvement than placebo. This is the first known study to associate method effectiveness with an improvement in quality of life and mood.

"Although [vaginal lubricants](#) and moisturizers may help vaginal dryness, they may not be effective for [women](#) with more severe vaginal changes because of loss of hormones at menopause," says Dr. JoAnn Pinkerton, NAMS executive director. "Vaginal therapies, including low-dose vaginal estrogen and intravaginal dehydroepiandrosterone, relieve both vaginal dryness and painful sex. This study also showed improvements in quality of life and sexual function for vaginal estradiol tablets over a vaginal moisturizer. Women with [vaginal dryness](#) and/or painful sex should talk to their healthcare providers about the best option for their particular situation."

Provided by The North American Menopause Society

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