

# Vaginal Renewal Program

- ~soothe vaginal dryness
- ~recover vaginal health without using hormones
- ~tips for choosing moisturizing lubricants



*A Woman's Touch*  
Sexuality Resource Center

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The Vaginal Renewal™ Program is intended to be used by anyone experiencing vaginal dryness and/or vaginal atrophy. The program promotes blood flow to the skin of the vulva and vagina and encourages more skin flexibility and thickness.

There are three main parts of the Vaginal Renewal™ Program and all are important for reducing vaginal dryness. The *key features* involve moisturizing the outer genital skin called the vulva, then moisturizing and healing the vaginal surface itself.

## CHOOSING PERSONAL LUBRICANTS

Lubricants applied directly to the skin and vagina are a good solution for vaginal dryness. Choosing the right one is important. Consider two main features when making your choice. Do they:

- **add moisture to the skin and/or**
- **seal in moisture.**

**WATER = MOISTURE.** Look for water-based ingredients to **MOISTURIZE**. Other ingredients (called humectants) hold water on the surface of the skin.

**SEALING** lubricants hold water in place. This leaves skin more conditioned and feeling less dry.

### **Moisturizing ingredients:**

- Aloe Vera
- Hyaluronic Acid
- Hydroxyethylcellulose or plant cellulose

### **Sealing ingredients that do not add moisture:**

- Dimethicone
- Dimethiconol
- Vitamin E (only use in combination with other ingredients)

### **Recommended brands:**

- **Oasis Silk** (moisturizes & seals)
- **Sensuva Hybrid** (moisturizes & seals)
- **Sliquid Organics Silk**, green label (moisturizes & seals)
- **Sutil Luxe** (moisturizes only)

When engaging in intimate play involving vaginal penetration (intercourse, finger play, or toys):

- **FeMani Smooth Touch** (silicone, seals only, safe for use with silicone toys)
- **Uberlube** (silicone, seals only, not safe for use with silicone toys)

### **Avoid:**

- Glycerin (drying)
- Mineral oil (petrochemical)
- Olive Oil (removes top layer of skin)
- Jojoba Oil (liquid wax)
- Shea Butter (high % stearic acid)
- Beeswax or Paraffin (wax)
- Petrolatum/Petroleum ointment, unless instructed by your health care provider
- Low-quality silicones: cyclopentasiloxane and cyclomethicone (solvents)
- Coconut Oil/butter (kills Lactobacillus)

### **STEP 1 - STOP HAVING ANY TYPE OF SEXUAL PENETRATION THAT CAUSES PAIN.**

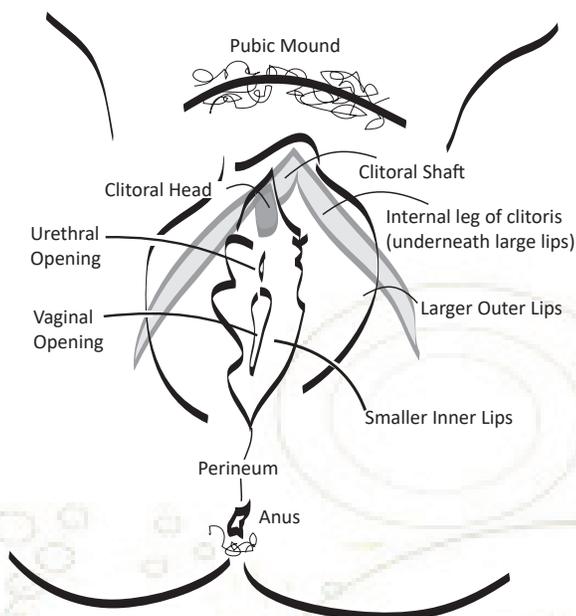
Pain builds a behavioral feedback loop that makes anticipation of sexual penetration negative. First, address the causes of pain, then resume sexual activity comfortably.

## STEP 2 - EXTERNAL VULVA MASSAGE AND MOISTURIZING

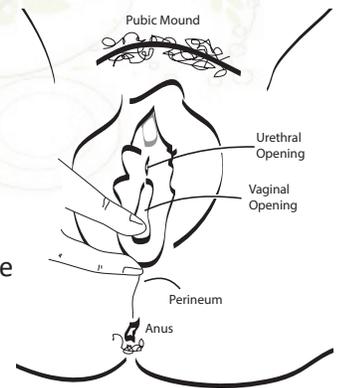
Begin by massaging the entire vulva (both sets of lips, the opening of the vagina and the place between the vagina and anus) to bring bloodflow to the skin and encourage skin health.

- First apply about a dime-sized dab of a moisturizing lubricant and smooth it lightly around so everything is coated and slippery.
- Use your finger tips (two or three) to press into the skin and then let the pressure up (called “press-and-release massage”), working your way around the outer lips of your vulva - where the hair grows. It might help to think of a clock face and work your way from 12:00 around and back to 12:00 again.
- When you are finished massaging your outer lips, massage your inner lips - where hair doesn't grow. Add more moisturizing lubricant as needed.
- Gently pinch the inner lips between your thumb and fingertips with a gentle squeezing motion. This should not hurt; your goal is just to move the blood out and allow it to return.
- Work your way all around the inner lips on both sides and up to the clitoris. Press and release on the clitoris and clitoral hood, too.
- Next massage the area around your vaginal opening using press-and-release all around the opening from 12:00 to 12:00 again.

The last area you should focus on is your **perineum**--the skin between your vaginal opening and anus. If you're having pain with penetration, it is **especially important** to include this part.



- Apply about a dime-size portion of lubricant to your thumb and index finger, and gently insert your thumb into your vaginal opening.
- Press down the skin of your lower vaginal wall (toward your anus) with your thumb. You can also gently squeeze the tissue of the perineum with your index finger if you can reach.
- Allow the muscles underneath the skin to relax and gently sweep your lubricated thumb from side to side. You are working to help this area become more flexible.
- Take a deep breath if it's tight and as you release the breath think of softening the muscles you are touching.



## STEP 3 - INTERNAL MESSAGE

We recommend using a therapeutic vibrating wand because it is difficult to fully massage the vaginal walls with your own fingers. The **FeMani Wands** are ideal because of their smooth surface and specially-designed vibration. However any smooth-shelled straight vibrator with a low-speed throbbly-style vibration will offer some benefit in this program.

1. Choose the vibrator *width* by determining how many of your own lubricated fingers you can fit inside your vagina when you are not sexually aroused. For example, if you are unable to comfortably have intercourse or require the use of the pediatric speculum for a pelvic exam, we suggest you start with the smallest size 1 wand. If you are currently having comfortable intercourse you may use the size 2 wand.
2. Coat the wand with your moisturizing lubricant and gently insert it into your vagina to a comfortable depth. If you feel pressure on your urethra, try bending your knees and angle the wand away from your urethra or bladder, then use a pillow to hold the wand in place.
3. Next press the purple button once for a low vibration setting and lay back. Find a comfortable position that allows you to relax.
4. Fully relax as it massages the vaginal walls. If you begin to feel tension, take a big breath and let it out slowly.
5. There is no need to move the wand in and out. It is often helpful to gently move it side to side in the vagina.
6. We recommend **5-10** minutes per session, once or every other day. More is not always better.

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You can switch to a larger size wand if needed when you are able to comfortably fit a lubricated finger inside along with the wand you are currently using.

If you are not comfortable using a therapeutic vibrating wand but are comfortable touching your vulva and vagina with your hands, you can do the internal massage with your fingers while using a moisturizing lubricant. While this is less effective, any massage is better than none. You can also teach a partner how to do this massage, or have your partner massage you before other intimate play begins.

### CAUTIONS, AND MOVING FORWARD

If you experience pain or discomfort with any aspect of this program discontinue it immediately. You should consult with your health care provider to determine how to proceed.

- Do not engage in sex with vaginal penetration if it is uncomfortable or painful.
- We encourage you and your partner to continue other pleasurable intimate play together without penetration.

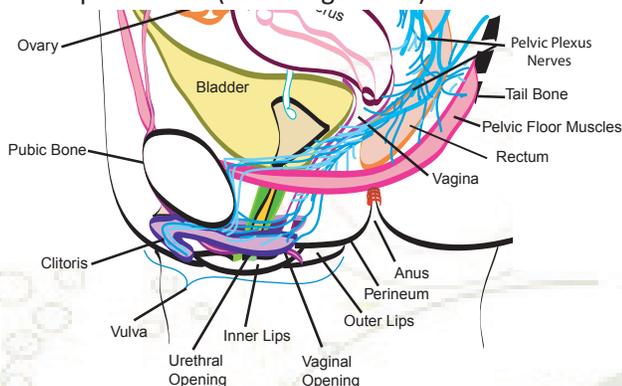
Although it is not true for everyone, after 4-6 weeks working with the VR program, many women are able to enjoy vaginal penetration comfortably. When engaging in intimate play involving vaginal penetration (intercourse, or finger play, or toys):

- Use a silicone-based lubricant on a partner plus the moisturizing lubricant you use for Vaginal Renewal™. Silicone lubricants will stay slippery much longer, and will help protect your skin from painful tearing.

### PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLES & FLEXIBILITY

If penetration of 1.5 to 2.5 inches into the vagina is comfortable, but then you feel as though you “run into a wall,” one of two things might be happening:

- Your pelvic floor may have lost its ability to relax and flex enough to allow penetration called High Tone Pelvic Floor Dysfunction or,
- Your pelvic floor may be contracting involuntarily to prevent penetration (called Vaginismus).



We recommend that you start by seeing your health care provider and/or a pelvic floor Physical Therapist to obtain an accurate diagnosis. Any home-based therapy you attempt will be more effective under the guidance of a pelvic floor therapist. For more information, pick up or download our brochure on *Pelvic Floor Health*.

## ***Vaginal Renewal™ Step by Step***

### **Step 1: Stop experiencing pain.**

Don't make things worse. Give this program a chance.

### **Step 2: External Vulva Massage**

Moisturize and massage the vulva with a moisturizing lubricant daily.

- Some people carry a small bottle of lubricant with them and use moisturize everytime after they urinate.
- Many people moisturize after a bath or shower.
- Many people moisturize and massage before they go to sleep at night.
- Remember to gently massage the perineum.

### **Step 3: Internal Vaginal Massage**

Using your moisturizing lubricant and therapeutic vibrating wand, massage the inside of the vagina. This helps to bring blood flow to heal the vagina without causing damage to the vaginal surface.

- If you have a very fragile vagina, go slowly. Use the wand only 3 minutes at a time at first.
- Work up to 5-10 minutes every or every other day.
- Wobble the wand gently side to side to help all areas of the vagina.

### **(optional) Step 4: Sexual Vaginal Penetration**

If you are comfortable with vaginal penetration, use a **silicone** lubricant on a partner (penis or toy), and use the **moisturizing** lubricant on your vulva and vagina. The two will work together as you create pleasurable friction.

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