The Vaginal Renewal™ Program is intended to be used by any woman experiencing vaginal dryness and/or atrophy. The program promotes blood flow to the skin of the vulva and vagina, and encourages more skin flexibility and thickness. There are two main parts of the Vaginal Renewal™ Program, and both are important for reducing vaginal dryness. The first involves moisturizing the outer genital skin, sometimes called the vulva. The second involves 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. With many products available, choosing the right one is important. Two main features should be considered when making your choice:

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

Figure 1. The vulva.

**Moisturizing ingredients:**

Look for water-based lubricants, because water is the “moisture”. Other ingredients (sometimes called humectants) help hold the water at the surface of the skin.

Ingredients to look for include:

- Aloe Vera,
- Hyaluronic Acid,
- Hydroxyethylcellulose or plant cellulose,
- Carrageenan

**Sealing ingredients:**

- Dimethicone,
- Dimethiconol,
- Vitamin E,
- Coconut Oil/butter (in combination with other ingredients only)

**Recommended brands:**

- Sliquid Organics Silk (green label),
- Sliquid Satin,
- Liquid Assets,
- FeMani Silken Touch,
- Sliquid Satin,
- Liquid Assets,
- FeMani Silken Touch,
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but are comfortable touching your vulva and vagina with your hands you can do the internal massage with your fingers, using a moisturizing lubricant. You can also teach a partner how to do this and 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.

- Please do not engage in sex with vaginal penetration if it is uncomfortable.
- We encourage you and your partner to continue other pleasurable intimate play together without penetration. (After 4-6 weeks working with the VR program, most can resume or begin vaginal penetration with comfort.)

When engaging in intimate play involving vaginal penetration (intercourse, or finger play, or toys):
- We recommend using a silicone-based lubricant as your lubricant rather than the moisturizing lubricant you use for Vaginal Renewal™
- Silicone lubricants will stay slippery much longer, and will help protect your skin from painful tearing.
- Use lubricant both inside your vagina, and on your partner, finger or toy. This slick barrier helps protect your skin and vagina.

Recommended brands include:
- Uberlube,
- FeMani Smooth Touch Silicone,
- ONE Move Silicone,
- Astroglide Diamond Silicone.

Pelvic Floor Muscles & Flexibility
If penetration of 1.5 to 2.5 inches 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,
- if you’ve previously experienced painful penetration, your pelvic floor may be contracting involuntarily to prevent penetration (called Vaginismus).

The first step is to verify that your experience of pain is indeed the result of an overly tight or inflexible pelvic floor. There are many conditions easily confused with high tone pelvic floor dysfunction, so self-diagnosis is difficult. If you think you might have either of these conditions, 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 is likely to be more effective under the guidance of a pelvic floor physical therapist. For more information, pick up or download our brochure on Pelvic Floor Health.

Other Sexual Health Tips
In addition to the Vaginal Renewal™ program, in order to maintain the best possible sexual health we recommend you:

- Enjoy at least one orgasm per week.

Orgasms bring blood flow to your pelvis, which helps keep your tissues strong and thick and your pelvic muscles strong and flexible. It also utilizes your circulatory system and your nervous system, and helps keep everything running smoothly. If you are not as orgasmic as you used to be, the Vaginal Renewal™ program may help your orgasms become stronger again. If you are not able to orgasm now, or have never been able to, see our AWT Orgasms brochure, or the book The Elusive Orgasm by Vivienne Cass, PhD.

- Eat the AWT Good Sex Diet.

This is a whole-food Mediterranean diet which focuses on antioxidant-rich, colorful food. It includes lots of fruits, vegetables, garlic, whole grains, nuts, beans, fish and poultry, but no high-fructose corn syrup sweetened products. Organic food has at least 30% more healthy antioxidants than conventionally grown food, so although it’s more expensive, it’s a much better health value. Chocolate, coffee, and tea also contain sex-healthy antioxidants. Don’t forget to drink water!

- Exercise to a sweat 30 minutes a day, six days a week.

Exercise is the best thing you can do for your overall health, and sexual health as well. Studies show that women who exercise until they sweat just before being sexual experience higher levels of sexual arousal than those who don’t. Prime your pump, and get moving.

- Stop smoking.

Also avoid second-hand smoke as well as places where people have smoked. Smoke contains chemicals that directly damage your blood vessels. Damaged blood vessels weaken your skin and lengthen the time it takes to heal from injury. So avoiding smoke in all forms is a major step towards protecting your sexual health.

- Floss your teeth.

How simple. Reducing inflammation in your gums cuts down on whole body inflammation. Body inflammation has a direct negative link to healthy sexual arousal, and flossing your teeth daily is one of the easiest ways to keep your sexual self in tip-top shape. Plus, your smile is worth it!