



## Your Vaginal Health: Vaginal Dryness

### What is vaginal dryness?

Vaginal dryness is a common condition, usually affecting women during or after menopause. It can make many everyday activities uncomfortable or painful.

### What are the causes of vaginal dryness?

Decreased estrogen levels are the main cause of vaginal dryness. Estrogen helps keep the vaginal tissue lubricated and flexible. Estrogen levels can lower for a number of reasons, including perimenopause or menopause, childbirth, breastfeeding, surgical removal of ovaries, and cigarette smoking.

Certain medications, such as antidepressants and antihistamines, can cause vaginal dryness. Douching can also cause vaginal dryness by washing away the vagina's natural lubrication or by causing irritation. Vaginal dryness might also be caused by using tampons. Stress may cause vaginal dryness, as well.

### What are the symptoms of vaginal dryness?

Aside from dryness, many women experience itching, burning, pain or pressure during sexual activity, or a feeling of pressure often accompanies vaginal dryness.

### Who experiences vaginal dryness?

Women of all ages can experience vaginal dryness, although it usually affects women during and after menopause. In fact, an estimated 10 to 40% of women who have reached menopause have experienced some symptom of vaginal dryness.

### How can I prevent vaginal dryness?

Do not douche or smoke cigarettes, which could cause vaginal dryness. Use a water-based lubricant during all sexual activity, especially if taking medications that cause vaginal dryness, such as contraception and antihistamines. Wash the genitals externally with warm water and a mild soap, if necessary. Use sanitary napkins instead of tampons. It might also help to drink plenty of water and get lots of sleep.

Performing Kegel exercises can help maintain vaginal health, as well as increase natural lubrication. For more information about Kegel exercises, please refer to the "Vaginal Health: Maintaining Your Vaginal Strength" document, which is available through Pure Romance's Web site. You can also refer to the product information for Ben Wa Balls, which is also available through Pure Romance's Web site.





## How can I treat vaginal dryness?

If vaginal dryness is due to decreased estrogen levels then estrogen hormone therapy, in the form of pills, creams, or other methods, could help treat the symptoms. Some women, however, prefer to use non-hormonal methods to treat their vaginal dryness. Using Fresh Start, Pure Romance's estrogen-free vaginal moisturizer, is an alternative to hormone therapy. A water-based lubricant should be used during all sexual activity. Pure Romance's water-based, water-soluble lubricants, Just Like Me and Sweet Seduction, absorb into the vaginal tissue and work with a woman's natural lubricant as she becomes aroused.

