Check Your Medicine Cabinets

Common meds can cause vaginal dryness.

March 5, 2018 By Kate Ferguson

After menopause, vaginal tissues may dry out because hormonal imbalances cause the body to secrete less natural fluid for hydration. But females of all ages may experience this dehydration as a result of over-the-counter cold and allergy drugs.

“Allergy medications and antihistamines can also dry out the body’s mucous membranes, causing dryness in the vaginal wall,” says Jennifer Berman, MD, a practicing urologist with specialized training in women’s urology and female sexual medicine based in Los Angeles.

What’s more, warnings on product packaging don’t mention this side effect, so many women are unaware of this potential problem.

Vaginal dryness affects many women during different phases of their lives. According to the Women’s Health Concern, “Around 17 percent of women ages 18 to 50 experience problems with vaginal dryness during sex, even before menopause takes place.”

The condition is common after menopause in women between ages 51 and 60 and causes a host of problems, such as pain during sex, loss of sexual desire and general discomfort in the vaginal area, that may interfere with a woman’s quality of life.

One possible solution is to find ways to treat sinuses with products that don’t contain antihistamines. In addition, a number of effective treatments can counteract the vaginal dryness associated with menopause and certain meds and medical procedures.

Health care providers who are knowledgeable about this issue can be very helpful.

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