Give Dryness the Slip

If sex hurts, maybe your body needs a little something extra.

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Normally, the vagina is a self-lubricating sexual organ, but thinning or shrinking of vaginal tissue can cause dryness and inflammation that lead to irritation (atrophic vaginitis) and painful sex.

That said, there are many reasons why vaginal tissue can thin out or shrink.

For example, the physical and emotional issues of menopause can be a culprit. “Medications can cause vaginal dryness, sensitivity to birth control pills, perimenopausal or menopausal hormonal changes and a lack of arousal,” says Hilda Hutcherson, MD, a clinical professor of obstetrics and gynecology and an associate dean at Columbia University in New York City, who is also the author of Having Your Baby: A Guide for African-America Women and What Your Mother Never Told You About Sex.

In addition, women may develop atrophic vaginitis if they have their ovaries surgically removed, and childbirth and breast-feeding can lower estrogen. What’s more, the vagina can become further irritated from soaps, laundry detergents, lotions, perfumes or douches. Smoking, tampons and condoms may also cause or make vaginal dryness worse.

But there are simple ways to treat the problems caused by thinned out or shrinking vaginal tissue. Hutcherson suggests women check out sexual lubricants currently on the market. She prefers the silicone-based ones because they lubricate the vaginal walls really well and last a long time. The biggest drawback with silicone lubes, though, is that they can stain sheets and are difficult to remove from fabric.

Still, that’s easy enough to fix: Just lie down on a towel.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/vaginal-dryness-23562-2417