



Vaginal atrophy:

Vaginal atrophy happens when the walls of the vagina get thin, dry, and inflamed, the main reason is that the body makes less estrogen, such as during and after menopause.

Symptoms:

- Vaginal dryness or burning
- Itching in your genitals
- Unusual vaginal discharge
- More yeast infections
- Burning when you pee
- A need to pee often
- A hard time holding pee in (incontinence)
- More urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- Discomfort or bleeding during or after sex
- Less natural lubrication when you have sex

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Causes:

When the body makes less estrogen, the lining of the vagina can become thinner and less stretchy. The vaginal canal can also narrow and shorten, this also lowers the amount of normal vaginal fluids.

It can change the acid balance of the vagina. Women who have just had a baby and are breastfeeding also have a drop in estrogen. These symptoms also occur in women who have had their ovaries removed or are taking certain medications.

Complications:

- Changes in the balance of acid in the vagina increase the risk of vaginal infection.
- Vaginal atrophy can contribute to urinary problems. You might experience increased frequency or urgency of urination or burning with urination. Some women experience more urinary tract infections or urine leakage (incontinence).

Diagnosis:

There are three methods to diagnose the condition:

1. The doctor will get a urine sample for testing, especially if the patient has urinary issues.
2. Pelvic exam
3. Acid balance test: for this test, your doctor may use a paper strip to check the acid balance in the vagina.



Treatment:

- Lubricants that are water-based, glycerin-free help reduce discomfort during sex.
- Apply water-based vaginal moisturizers every 2 to 3 days. Their effect lasts longer than a lubricant.
- Applying topical estrogen cream directly to the vagina relieves symptoms quickly and effectively. It also reduces the exposure of the bloodstream to estrogen.
- Oral estrogen is also an option.
- Systemic estrogen therapy is available as a skin patch, an implant under the skin, tablets, or a topical gel.

