

Vaginal dilator therapy

Vaginal tightness can be caused by many different factors. The vagina can have a congenital structural abnormality. Vaginal surgery, skin disease or muscle tension around the vagina can cause vaginal tightness. The vagina can also lose some of its flexibility and scar as a result of pelvic radiotherapy, which may cause vaginal stenosis. Vaginal tightness and vaginal stenosis can cause pain during intercourse and make intercourse more difficult. In these cases, gynecological exams can also be difficult and painful. Stenosis of the outer genitalia can also cause difficulty urinating.

Vaginal stenosis and loss of flexibility can be prevented by **using a vaginal dilator regularly**. Before dilator therapy is started, you must discuss the treatment with the doctor responsible for your care to make sure that there are no existing contraindications and that the treatment is necessary. You should not start the dilator therapy if there are surgical wound in the vagina or around the outer genitalia that have not healed, or if you have been diagnosed with a vaginal infection.

Intercourse is permitted during the treatment, and it is the best dilation method. However, intercourse is not always an option. The dilator treatment can be carried out using fingers or with a dilator wand. You can use your fingers to help choose correct wand size. You can get the wands from a sexual counselor. The wands come in different sizes and you can move to a larger wand during the course of your treatment if necessary. You can also find different wands suitable for dilator treatment equipped with a vibration function from most pharmacies and sex shops. We recommend using a water-based lubricant or liquid body oil during intercourse and when using wands to carry out the dilator therapy.



Practical guide for dilator therapy:

- We recommend you do dilator therapy once a day in the beginning. When the vagina has stretched enough, it is usually necessary to do dilator therapy 2 to 3 times a week so that the stretched vagina holds its new size. You can substitute wand based dilator therapy with intercourse.
- Think about your normal daily routine and determine a time beforehand when you can carry out the dilator therapy in peace. If you do not plan for the treatment beforehand, it is easy to forget about it and you will not be able to achieve the results you hope for.
- Doing the dilator treatment by yourself can feel odd and difficult at first, but usually this becomes easier as the treatment progresses. Relaxing also helps. Things such as having a warm bath beforehand or listening to your favorite music can help you relax. Sometimes involving your intimate partner in the treatment can also help.
- You can carry out the dilator therapy in different positions, for example lying on your back with your knees bent and a pillow under your shoulders, or standing up with one leg up on the edge of a bathtub or a stool, for example.
- Remember to use a lot of **lubricant!**
- When you are using the dilator wand, place it calmly and carefully into the vaginal opening. In the beginning, you can use a hand mirror to help you find the right spot. Press the tip of the wand towards your lower back: the wand should be in the same angle with your thighs.
- Move the dilator wand carefully forward, back, and from side to side, and twist it around carefully. The dilator treatment should last for about 5 minutes per session.
- Remove the wand slowly by rotating it clockwise and counterclockwise.
- Short and frequent dilator therapy sessions produce good results more quickly and effectively than infrequent and long stretches.
- There can be a small amount of blood during dilator therapy. This is not a cause for concern.
- Making sure the dilator equipment is clean is important to avoid infections. You can wash the dilator wands using water and mild soap.
- To ensure good intimate hygiene, it is sufficient to wash the genital area once a day using lukewarm water and patting the area dry. Avoid using soap and disinfectants to prevent mucosal dryness. To ensure that the mucosa stays flexible, we recommend using water-based lubricants or body oils. For more information, please see [Intimate skin and mucosal care](#).

If the dilator therapy must be paused, it is continued as soon as possible, for example as soon as the mucosa has healed. If the treatment causes pain or recurrent and clearly noticeable bleeding, it is best to discuss the issue with a sexual counselor or a doctor. Contact the hospital responsible for your care if needed!