



## GENITOURINARY SYNDROME OF MENOPAUSE: DOES IT INTERFERE WITH SEXUAL FUNCTION?

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**Context:** The genitourinary syndrome of menopause (GSM) has been associated with substantial negative impact on interpersonal relationships, quality of life, daily activities, and sexual function. As much as half of all postmenopausal women experience vulvovaginal symptoms such as dryness, dyspareunia and irritation, although the degree to which women are bothered by these conditions varies considerably based on the country.

**Objective:** To evaluate the proportion of postmenopausal women who have sexual intercourse and for those who don't to identify the reasons why.

**Methods:** A prospective study was conducted at a tertiary hospital which included postmenopausal women of the outpatient gynecological clinic. From November 2016 to May 2017, patients were invited to participate in this study by answering to a questionnaire (8 to 11 questions). The questionnaire included questions about age, parity, age of menopause, history of hysterectomy, hormonal therapy, sexual activity in the previous 6 months, genitourinary symptoms and, if applicable, the reasons for not having sexual intercourses. The data were analyzed comparing two groups: women that have sexual intercourse and women that don't.

**Results:** One hundred and eighty women were included. The median age was 62 years (range:43-85); 11.4% (n=21) were nulliparous and 59.8% (n=110) were multiparous. The median age of menopause was 49 years, 52.7% women (n=97) used hormonal therapy and 18,5% (n=34) had been submitted to a hysterectomy. Only one third of all women mentioned dyspareunia after menopause. Ninety eight (53.3%) referred having had sexual intercourse in the past six months. Those that denied having sexual intercourses did so because: they don't have a partner (50%); their partner wasn't able to have sexual intercourse (31.4%); lack of desire (10.5%); vulvovaginal pain (7%); other reason (1%). Women who referred having sexual intercourse were slightly younger (median ages: 59 vs 65). From those who denied having had sexual intercourse, 27.9% (n=24) would like to have it but only 10.5% (n=9) believed that medical attention would improve their sexual function.

**Conclusion:** Almost half of all women included in our study denied having sexual intercourse, but only 7% mentioned vulvovaginal pain as the main reason for that. Despite the fact that one third of all women mentioned dyspareunia after menopause, only 10.5% believed that medical attention would improve their sexual function.

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