

**VAGINOPLASTY  
POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

**VAGINAL SOFTENING & STRETCHING EXERCISES**

Now that the initial healing is complete it is up to you to ensure that the tissues and suture lines are softened before having sexual relations. These areas, at the entrance to the vagina and within the vagina itself, are rigid from the healing process and require exercises that enable comfortable intercourse and proper fit. If you are not planning to be sexually active now, this series of exercises may be delayed. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need a further description of the vaginal softening and stretching exercises.

**VAGINAL SOFTENING & STRETCHING EXERCISES  
COMMENCE SIX WEEKS AFTER SURGERY**

Plan on spending ten minutes twice a day doing these exercises for the best results. If you have not done so already, purchase several dilators of various sizes which can be found on the Internet (I suggest <http://www.kegelme.com>). Continue to use the estrogen cream daily to aid in healing and for the regeneration of new collagen. Most women will achieve their desired results within two weeks, but it would not be unusual for several additional weeks' exercise to achieve comfortable intercourse.

Initially you may experience some degree of irritation or discomfort. You may see a small amount of blood or have some persistent discharge. This will diminish as the tissues are massaged, collagen increases and the surgical scar softens. The more diligent you are with the exercises the sooner any discomfort will resolve. A major mistake is to skip these exercises due to irritation or pain. It will only delay your ability to achieve your goal.

First, find a comfortable position on your bed with your legs slightly apart and with your knees bent to give access to your vagina. Under the skin at the entrance is the place where sutures have been tied, so it is not unusual that this location is the most sensitive area and quite firm. Gently, with the use of a lubricant such as Astroglide, stretch this area by placing your thumbs next to each other just inside the opening and your index fingers next to each other on the outside of the perineum in a pincer-like position. Then gently but firmly stretch the perineum by pulling each hand away from each other towards your thighs as far as you can, to the point of moderate discomfort. Hold the tissue for 5-10 seconds, and then relax. Repeat this exercise for several minutes, then move onto using your dilators. Start with your smallest dilator and a lubricant. Gently put pressure on the floor of the opening of your vagina and keep a constant pressure on this area to slowly help relax and stretch the perineum. You do not have to go very deep into the vagina at this early stage of your exercises. You should feel pressure or moderate discomfort in the beginning. After a few minutes go deeper into the vagina and start doing side-to-side stretching with your

dilator, focusing on putting pressure downwards towards the rectal area as well. Concentrate on areas where a band may be felt or where you feel more tender. Surgery usually does not affect the depth of your vagina so eventually you should achieve full depth of penetration. Repetitive side-to-side and outside-to-inside movements with your dilators will encourage the strengthening of the vaginal skin. This movement, along with constant downward pressure softens scars that may result from reconstructive surgery. As the vaginal tissues soften you can advance to larger dilators. It may take many days using the same dilator before you are comfortable enough to advance to the next size, so don't be discouraged! Typically patients say it takes about two weeks of conscientiously exercising to reach their goal. Stop at the dilator size that approximates the vaginal diameter you desire. **DO NOT OVER DILATE!** Once you are comfortable and happy with the diameter and depth of your vagina you can stop the exercises and resume normal sexual activity.