

In this day of lifestyle medicine, much is being offered in the field of aesthetic medicine. No one knows what the long-term side effects of these applications. Under the same guise, cosmetic vaginal surgery (CVS) is offered to patients as an enhancement of appearance and sexual improvement.

The appearance of the external genitalia is constitutional, and is dependent on race and physique of the woman. Nothing in the way of normal activities will alter its appearance, except the process of vaginal delivery. Even with normal vaginal delivery, the only part that is altered is the area between the lower edge of the vagina and the anus (the perineum). This area becomes scarred due to the need for episiotomy in the process of delivery of the baby. All other components of the external genitalia, like the labia minora and majora and the clitoris are unchanged.

HYMENOPLASTY

The hymen is a ring of tissue that remains at the entrance of the vagina after the formation of the vagina during foetal development. It is usually torn at the first sexual intercourse and then degenerates into a very thin rim of tissue. It can be recreated surgically, and the extent of the plastic operation depends on the amount of residual tissue. This will determine if it can be carried out as an outpatient or day procedure.

The hymen is a sign of virginity and its importance varies greatly in different societies and cultures. However, in the real world, recreating the hymen will not recreate virginity in total.

Virginity embodies not only the hymen, but mind, body and soul!

LABIALPLASTY

Labialplasty - trimming and reducing the size of the labia minora - is the more common procedure, as some women complain that it is too large. There are very few medical indications for this procedure.

In women who are very active in sport, in particular, horse riding, cycling, running, it may be a hindrance, and abrasions may arise. A large labial minora may be uncomfortable during sexual intercourse. I suspect that the dawn of the minimalist panty is the reason why there is demand for this operation.

Whatever the reason, it is important to know that the labia minora is highly innervated, and necessary for sexual stimulation. By trimming it, the end result may

COSMETIC VAGINAL SURGERY - IS IT NEW?

Procedures that can purportedly enhance sexual appeal.

be aesthetic, but sexual stimulation may be reduced. Moreover, if there is excessive scarring due to poor technique or infection, painful sex is the end result.

The other labial cosmetic surgery is enhancement of the labia majora, to make it look more prominent. It is essentially aesthetic, and adds nothing to function. The surgery involves injection of silicon or the transplantation of fat from the thighs.

PELVIC FLOOR RECONSTRUCTION

Essentially, it involves tightening of the muscles around the vagina. These muscles are usually stretched or torn during delivery, and if not correctly repaired at the time of delivery, followed by good postnatal exercises, will loosen with time.

The surgical procedure is commonly termed **anterior and/or posterior colporrhaphy**, or sometimes simply called **pelvic floor repair or reconstruction**. If there is associated stress urinary incontinence, an addition procedure is carried out at the same time by way of a mid-urethral sling (TVT).

"Vaginal Rejuvenation" and "Designer Laser Vaginoplasty" are new proprietary terminologies. These have been created to add glamour to the time honoured surgeries, and nothing else. The use of the laser to do the surgery has no advantage, although it is claimed to cause less bleeding.

Included in this procedure is G-spot enhancement - to heighten sexual enjoyment! The G-spot is not an anatomical landmark in the vagina. Theoretically, it is said to be located on the anterior (front) vaginal wall at the junction between the bladder and the urethra (urinary passage). It **cannot be identified** by clinical examination or any other mean, and varies from individual to individual.

Sexual enjoyment between man and woman is dependent on many factors, the least of which is the anatomy of the man and woman. If there is need to rejuvenate the vagina, what about rejuvenating the man and his anatomy! Why should the responsibility of improving sexual response fall mainly on the woman?

Sexual response between couples is about mind, body and soul. The most important sex organ is the 6 inches between the ears (the brain).

IN THE END...

All the procedures mentioned above are real surgical procedures - they are not simple outpatient or day surgeries, with no "down time". As in all surgeries, complications like haemorrhage, infection, and perforation of the bladder, rectum and anal canal, can and do occur. The end result may be **painful scarring of the external genitalia and vagina, leading to dry and painful sexual intercourse**, the very anti-thesis of what the patient desires.

