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Free Guide of Tips to Dilating to help women self-treat vaginismus

Welcome to the D-Guide, surely the most practical section in the Vaginismus-Awareness-Network.org website. Congratulations for being ready to set out on this wonderful journey that will get you to own your body and love your body and yourself in ways you probably found impossible before.

Here you will find very detailed tips and information to help you on your way. We can't be there to hold your hand physically but imagine these tips coming from the heart of a mother to her daughter, or from your best friend, because they were written with that spirit.

This guide took a few months to be put together from the knowledge of a few years of experience researching and studying vaginismus plus our own experience with it and advice we gathered from over 100 women with vaginismus we have had conversations with in the past few years. Hard work but nothing major, and yet nobody has so far published such a detailed guide for free, despite maybe saying they care for women's health.

Some of us found that extremely disheartening and it also fired us up, so we decided it was time to share this basic information and good tips because the Art of Dilating isn't rocket science and shouldn't remain a secretive treatment that some clinics make women pay thousands of dollars for.

DISCLAIMER: This guide was not designed to provide medical advice. All material is gathered from the experience of hundreds of women who experienced vaginismus but it is for information only and is not intended to be a substitute for professional or medical advice, diagnosis, and treatment. Please review the information contained on vaginismus-awareness-network.org carefully and confer with a health care professional specialized in vaginismus, as needed.

The Guide to Dilating: INSTRUCTIONS



This guide is divided into 20 sections. You don't necessarily have to follow them in the same order as presented, or read all of them, you can go directly to the part you have more need or interest for. Play by ear.

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INTRODUCTION TO DILATING AND DILATORS

Systematic desensitisation (a.k.a. Dilating)

Gathering from both scientific research, our personal experience and the experience of hundreds of girls who treated vaginismus this way and shared their success in support groups (read one of these [SUCCESS STORIES](#) or some of the TESTIMONIALS by women who are using our guide successfully), dilating is still the number one scientifically proven, most successful, less painful, more natural and lasting method to cure vaginismus.

It's certainly the method we recommend here if you want to self-treat vaginismus, also because it's the one method you can use at home, on your own, at your pace and almost for free! Or you may feel better having a doctor help you with this method or you may incorporate it as part of your therapy if you are seeing a psych.

Systematic Desensitization is a technique used to solve a wide range of psychological problems but in particular it is very effective to overcome fears and phobias, usually in the context of Behavioural Therapy sessions.

To put it very simply, in such sessions people are very gradually exposed to what they fear, but it's not a direct exposure (that technique is called 'Flooding' and can be way too aggressive!), but rather in small steps, progressing from being exposed to just the IMAGE of what you fear or an imaged situation, to being exposed to something similar to it, say a toy spider (or the leg of a toy spider!) if you suffer from arachnophobia, and so on, so that the physical reactions to those fears can be recognized, discussed, controlled and managed until a person is able to face the actual phobic object (or event) without the old negative and almost automatic physical reactions.

When this was applied to vaginismus, it meant helping women get comfortable with very small objects/or fingers being progressively inserted in the vagina until one the size of a penis (or of a tampon, or speculum) could be inserted without phobic reactions or without muscular clamping.

When this technique was first applied to vaginismus many decades ago, gradual dilating proved to be very successful and further studies then only confirmed the extremely high success rates (See some of these studies in our [References](#) section for more information).

If you want to give this method a try, you can find many tips in our free guide or you can join the Vaginismus 1 Forum or other support groups and ask for advice there, at each step of the way, as many women do.

We believe it's worth giving this method a try. We don't profit from this website, we are not selling you a treatment cause we gain from it, we are just saying that we've been through it, and we are here to tell the tale for your benefit.

Dilating can be done at your own pace so it can be a pleasant stress-free experience: there are NO scientific studies proving that you have to dilate a fixed number of times over a fixed number of weeks, at for a fixed length of time each time, in order to treat vaginismus. It is not like taking a pill.

Dilating on your own (but with a therapist too) can take some time. It can take from as little as a week or two, to as long as months or years, it really depends on how often you'll dilate, the support you have, what other medical problems you may have that slows you down, how enthusiastic or depressed you are about vaginismus, the kind of partner you have and your beliefs about sex.

Quick fixes such as Botox or One-week treatments can look much more appealing for sure, but dilating not only works just as effectively, it also has many benefits:

Gradual Desensitization: Pros

- * It's free or cheap!
- * You can do it on your own, at your pace, in your home or with your partner.

- * It's totally painless (if done properly) and apart from some initial burning sensations, due to the muscles being stretched, there are no side effects.
- * Its effect are lasting and even if vag. should come back, as it may no matter what the treatment used, you would KNOW how to deal with it and it would be much faster the second time around.
- * It has a scientific success rate close to 95% or more.
- * It can take as little as a couple of months to progress through all the dilators on your own. (Depending on whether you have primary or secondary vaginismus and depending on the partner or support you have).
- * Slow and steady wins the race :)
- * Most of all, if you take your time, without any pressure, you will get to know your vagina and your body in a way that none of the other treatments will allow you to and you will respect your private parts in time and gain their trust, and it is an amazing experience.

Gradual Desensitization: Cons

Looking at dilators can be upsetting at first, if you join a support groups you can read hundreds of posts of girls feeling shocked or very upset at the idea of using dilators. Some girls may think they will never be able to insert one of those or go through the process on their own, without some professional help guiding them along.

It is too easy to say that if you feel that way, you are not alone and that all the ones who succeeded thought they were just as hopeless cases as you may feel now. You may still think your case is really that desperate and that others were just exaggerating. So it's ok. That's why we wrote the step-by-step guide, to reassure you a bit hopefully, to share the tips that worked best for us and help you go past the first obstacles or reservations so you can use this method without needing expensive help.

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You may not succeed the first time around. Sometimes you are just not in the time of your life where you can dedicate energy and time to this process, other things may be on your mind or you may have other health issues making it hard for you to find enthusiasm for dilating, so don't despair. Leave it to a better time, there should be no rush.. Some women noticed that the second time around worked better for them and was successful, not because they were doing something differently but simply because before wasn't evidently the right time.

You may feel that without someone's actual help, encouragement or a personal coach, you'll never be able to stick through the whole 'programme'. But that's exactly the trick: this is not something you HAVE TO do, it is no programme and even just getting to know your vulva (see our picture free [Vulvar Anatomy](#)) would be a success. So if you feel that you need to be pressured to do this, we can just say that maybe, just maybe, this isn't the right moment for you and your vagina to be doing this. When the right time comes, your body will be ready and you'll feel the enthusiasm and you won't need more help than this guide and hopefully a good gynaecologist and/or partner. Anyway, if you still feel you need help, then there are great physical therapists around who can help you, if you're so lucky to live in an area or country where physical therapists exist. See the section on Physical Therapy or try and contact one for help. And of course there are always [forums and support groups on vaginismus](#) that you can join. Check our list or start a blog :)

Good luck...

Before you begin this journey

Now, before you begin reading our guide and try dilating to cure vaginismus, you hopefully will have first read in the section "Treatments: Pros and Cons" how [systematic desensitisation \(a.k.a. Dilating\)](#) is one of the most used, gentlest, most effective and cheapest method that you could try to solve vaginismus; its positives outweighing the negatives by far.

But in order to get the best out of it and have a smooth journey, make sure you know your vagina and your hymen well before you begin. They can be your best allies, so if you still haven't, check out our graphic-free section on [Vulvar Anatomy](#).

Also, make sure you are aware of the many [misconceptions](#) about vaginismus and what it is NOT.

Before you begin, it's best if you are clear about the expectations (or [sexpectations](#)) you or your partner may have about the final outcome of this process. Being able to finally have intercourse can be a great bonus in a relationship BUT it won't fix an insensitive partner, it won't fill gaps created by lack of understanding and lack of love and it will unlikely turn you into a sex Goddess overnight.

Basically, the fewer expectations you two have about sex and less stress and deadlines you place upon yourself in regards to getting to the finishing line, the quicker and smoother this journey will be.

Overall, the best starting point for you before trying to treat vaginismus and commit yourself to dilating, would be that of feeling that whether or not you managed to treat it, should NOT make a big difference in your life and that you can be happy, loving and loved even WITH it, no big deal.

Before starting, you and your partner should be very aware that you are already a fully lovable woman, independently from your ability to have something inserted in your vagina, and that truly loving relationships are not at all based on intercourse, that men don't NEED sex nor do you owe it to them, even as a wife, that your vagina is your friend and shocking as it may sound, that it is likely that vaginismus may after all be [a blessing in disguise](#)...

I know it may take some time or some insights to see it this way, but that is what happened to me and to other women, we became aware of the direct and indirect pressure we were put under to treat vaginismus or to be fully sexual, and we started questioning things. And it was powerful...

If you are not in that frame of mind and you are pretty 'desperate' to treat it, then it could be harder to go through the process and stay motivated if things shouldn't go right the first time around, or if your partner started stressing you out and be impatient, but if you want to give dilating a try anyway, hopefully you'll see through this journey that your vagina IS quite cool in fact and that she has some valid points to make...

Either way, best of luck...

On-line Guides to Dilators

In case our guide wasn't helpful enough, thankfully you can find a good number of some short guides online too. Most are not super-detailed but they can still be very helpful and have tips we can all learn from so they are worth checking out too:

* [Information for the Use of Vaginal Dilators](#) A leaflet for women who attend the Middlesex Clinic hospital (USA).

*Amielle Dilators' producers put a short but helpful ["how to use" guide for their dilators](#).

*You can find the [Laurel Prescriptions](#) Guidelines for using Venus Vaginal Inserts for the Management of Vaginismus

*Or some [Instructions on the Use of Vaginal Dilators for the Treatment of Vaginal Agenesis](#) by the Centre for Young Women's Health (USA).

PREFACE: THE GOLDEN RULE

Do you know the Greek story of Orpheus who wanted to rescue his wife Eurydice from the Underworld where she had been kept prisoner? After risking his life to descend there and playing his sweet melody in front of the Gods of the Hades?, they agreed that he could have his wife back, but only on the condition that he did not look back towards her until they had reached the land of the living.

Unfortunately curiosity again killed the cat, and Orpheus turned just before reaching the end of the steep path, because he started doubting that Eurydice was in fact following behind him.

This story can be a wonderful metaphor for couples trying to treat vaginismus together and rushing the last steps... As you probably already realized by reading the tips on dilating, there is no strict set of rules to follow to treat vaginismus except for following your vagina's pace and nobody else's, and being very gentle and loving. But there is one rule to observe religiously, and it's a very simple one, yet one that the wish to see if the treatment is working, will actually risk causing a setback.

NEVER ever let yourself experience pain. If you have intercourse or penetration with something that hurts you and you feel pain, you will reinforce that idea in your head and body that insertions will be painful and things will get worse!

So if you are having painful intercourse now, stop it immediately. Tell your partner why you need not to risk causing your vagina any pain and how trying before its time could be counterproductive. Tell him the Orpheus story... The world of the living IS very close, do not fear.

Trust Eurydice... she is climbing the steps...

1. DILATORS: GET TO KNOW THEM

Dilator is a fancy word but it doesn't have to be a fancy or expensive instrument. You may find that someone else may use the words 'vaginal trainers,' 'spacers,' and dilators interchangeably. They are all the same thing.

A dilator is any solid object that is inserted into the vagina to retrain and 'stretch' the vagina. A woman starts with a small one and after gradually becoming able to comfortably accommodate it, progresses to a larger size. Eventually she will be able to accommodate a dilator the size of a penis or a speculum without pain.

Dilators can be bought online, in some stores, or can be given to you by a health care provider. You can also use household objects such as q-tips, tampons, candles, vegetables, or your own fingers. Some people also use vibrators or dildos.

Since vaginismus can stem from a phobia of having ANYTHING inserted in the vagina, it would be normal if you felt at best a little uncomfortable when you first hear that one of the best treatments to cure a phobia of having something inserted, is to insert something! Just like it happens whenever the technique of [systematic desensitization](#) is used, the thing that is the most scary to us, (say a big spider, international flight etc.) will be dealt with only as a last step, whereas the first ones we'll be exposed to will be very tiny and not too scary at all. But yes, if you focus on the final step, you may think "NO WAY!"... The biggest dilator in particular can look a little intimidating.

I still remember when I was first told, in my support group, that the best way to treat vaginismus was that of inserting dilators and when I saw a picture of them. I cried my heart out... I rushed into the toilet and fell on the floor sobbing and it was unstoppable... I remember feeling that admitting that I needed the help of those "things" meant admitting that I wasn't "normal", that I could not have had a first time like other girls have, and that the first thing entering me would not have been a penis but an ugly-looking, cold, plastic thing... Also, the biggest ones just looked impossibly big to me, I had a hard time inserting a tampon, so I really didn't believe that huge thing could have entered such a tiny space, or not without hurting me anyway...

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Thankfully I was just lacking self-confidence and vulva-knowledge, as I realized most of us vag. girls do before we start educating ourselves about this problem... It also took me some time and support before I realized that first of all I could have used fingers or other more friendly-looking objects and not necessarily those plastic or silicone things.

Also, I soon started seeing the whole process of dilating not as a struggle to treat something horrible, but as a way to own my vagina and get to know her, which was an AMAZING experience. And finally, as soon as I gradually moved from the first tiniest finger to a bigger one, the look of the biggest dilator no longer seemed that impossible and scary to me.

So if you feel that way or similarly, you are not alone. Just leave the biggest dilator aside for the moment. No need to focus on that one just yet. Just focus on the tiniest dilator (or finger or q-tip) you'll decide to start with...

If you joined a support group for vaginismus, you'll find out how common these initial emotions are. You deserve total understanding from the people around you. You're not a chicken or a child. We can just suggest that you take ALL the time you need to get comfortable with the IDEA of dilators first, and only then move on to more practical steps. There is no rush...

Ideally you will be at this step only after having a clear understanding of the anatomy of your [vagina and hymen](#) and knowing a bit about vaginismus and its [misconceptions](#). If you haven't, it's not surprising that dilators may sound a little scary, so if the idea of dilators still makes you highly uncomfortable, that's ok. You may want to take some time to browse around the website a bit more or you can join a [support group](#) where you can share your concerns.

Hopefully with time you will feel confident enough to try the first steps. You don't have to feel 100% positive... It will be normal to feel a little anxious and skeptical at the beginning. We hope that the tips here and some tender loving care to your vagina will unlock your terrific potential and help you bloom. You can do it. We all thought we couldn't.

And yes, we all thought our case was a hopeless one. But give your vagina a chance to show you what knowledge and love can do.

2. TRANSITION TO DILATORS

You'll know when you're ready to try dilating because the idea will provoke some slight excitement, mixed with a little bit of apprehension, but no big drama and anxiety... It is very important that you'll let your vagina know that she won't be rushed or forced or scared. You probably shouldn't start this if you are threatened by someone, stressed out, or depressed about it. Try to work on those feelings first and what they are trying to tell you.

Also, inserting dilators at a time or pace your vagina is not comfortable with, just because you feel that the sooner the better (or the more the better) is NOT something we suggest you do to her...

The journey to cure vaginismus should be as effortless as possible and any distress should be dealt with by listening to your vagina, not by shutting her up. Having your vagina do what you want her to and forcing dilating sessions on her, blocking out all questions and resistance, and scolding yourself for being weak and a chicken, may work, but this will simply shut feelings up and send them elsewhere deep inside, waiting to re-emerge in a different and possibly worse way.

Overall, the best starting point for you before trying to treat vaginismus and commit yourself to dilating, would be that of feeling that whether or not you managed to treat it, should NOT make a big difference in your life and that you can be happy, loving and loved even WITH it, no big deal.

Before starting, you and your partner should be very aware that you are already a fully lovable woman, independently from your ability to have something inserted in your vagina, and that truly loving relationships are not at all based on intercourse, that men don't NEED sex nor do you owe it to them, even as a wife, and that your vagina is your friend and deserves your unconditional love.

3. CHOICE OF DILATORS

If you're ready to try experimenting with the dilators, here's a selection of them. See which one you think you may feel more comfortable using and then click on any information you may need regarding dilating.

WARNINGS - Please Read

*Whatever you choose to use, make sure that it's perfectly clean or sterile or that you cover it with a condom and then put [lube](#) on it (and plenty of lube too!).

*If you decide not to use natural, do-it-yourself dilators and choose to buy them instead, wait before buying any dilator online or in a sex-shop, and find out first if you can order them through your gynaecologist. In some countries, like in the UK, you can get them on prescription. Also, make sure if your insurance covers for them somehow.

* We don't get any money to advertise the following companies. We just think they are the best or cheapest ones for reasons we explain. So we try to be fair. If you think your product too should appear here, feel free to email us and we may add it for free.

*If you have serious economic difficulties but do not want to use home-made dilators, please drop us an email and we'll see what can be done to help you. Every once in a while, some companies offer us free dilators to give away or dilators with a discount so we will let you know.

We would like to send a heartfelt thank the Soul Source Company and the Owen Mumford Company which kindly donated some sets of their dilators for free to some of the women in our forum.

1. Do-It-Yourself Dilators!

First of all, there are natural or home-made dilators which are free, or cheap and totally effective! They include:

PARTS OF THE BODY (fingers, partner's fingers)

OBJECTS (q-tips/cotton swabs, candles, tampons applicators, etc.)

VEGETABLES (zucchini, carrots...)

Then there are dilators you can buy online instead or in a sex-shop.

2. Dilators bought on-line, in sex-shops or manufactured

Before choosing the best dilator for you, you'll need to know the following:

Dilators: Texture and material

Dilators you can buy online or that your own doctor may write you a prescription for, can come in a variety of materials such as:

PLASTIC

GLASS

SILICONE

The main difference among the textures is in the price and in how rigid or soft they may feel to the touch.

We define SOFT dilators the silicone ones and vegetables.

We define HARD dilators the plastic, glass and wax ones.

Usually, the softest dilators will be more similar to a real penis than a hard one. We know penises are supposed to be hard when erect, but even when a penis is hard it's still human flesh, not concrete! And the softest are therefore usually the most expensive.

VEGETABLES as Dilators!



Peel into desired shape, put a condom and lube on them and there you go! Easy peasy, cheap and eco-friendly! Some women will be grossed out by the thought of using vegetables as dilators, but take it from some of us who used them and loved them.

Remember that once you peel them cover them with a condom, you would not even know that you are not using more 'sophisticated' dilators. Plus, they are for free (almost), and that can help a lot of women from countries where they just can't afford buying regular dilators. And the other cool thing is that you can peel them into any shape you need, so they are very helpful especially to cover for those gaps in sizes that some dilator sets have. You can use zucchinis or carrots, just give them a second thought before discard the idea.

Soon we'll add here some practical ideas on how to use some of these cool vegetables :)

Dilators sold on-line: the choice

Here is a short list of recommended websites selling dilators. Once you know what material you prefer and at what price or size, it should be easier to choose among them. Remember that to spread out the cost or to just see what they are like and how you feel with them, you may just buy one of them at a time, and then add more to 'your collection'.

Click on their links to see pictures and prices.

1 [SOUL SOURCE](#) dilators (a set of 8 silicone dilators)



Recommended because they look friendly, they are colourful and soft, and because there are 8 of them so there is no big gap between sizes and their smallest one is the smallest you can buy from any manufacturer, so it's useful for people who

need to start from a really small dilator. They are a bit expensive, but you could just buy one or two and use 'home-made' dilators for the rest.

2 [Amielle Comfort - Vaginal Trainer](#) (a set of 4 plastic dilators).



Probably the most widely used in the U.S. and U.K. Relatively inexpensive, plus they are available on prescription in the U.K. Biggest complaint is probably that the size difference between 3 and 4 is significant and that they are hard plastic. (To bridge the gap, you can always use some self-made dilator or use your fingers or buy some other individual dilator from other companies selling smaller ones.) On their website they have a good page on the [self-treatment of vaginismus](#) and a short but helpful ["how to use" guide](#) for their dilators in PDF.

3. [Laurel Prescriptions](#)

A set of 7 wax vaginal inserts with a treatment guide.

4. [Femistent](#)

These guys are very much into giving options! So much in fact that they have a cute ["Decision Tree"](#) to help you :)

It may take you a long time to figure all possible options out, but at the end we guess you'll have the perfect dilator for you :) Also, they come with a guide but it's not available online so we don't know how detailed it is.

[Dildoes and Vibrators as Dilators](#)

Some women, especially when they move towards the biggest dilators, may find it comfortable and fun to use DILDOS or VIBRATORS which can be bought in a sex shop or ordered online...

A DILDO would not be different from the set of dilators sold by the websites above, except that they are often shaped like a penis and come in fancy colours. And they may be cheaper too. But they are usually very

big and not suitable for the first dilating sessions where you need the smallest dilator you can find.

VIBRATORS instead seem to be very helpful for women who need to be very aroused or very relaxed to be able to dilate, although other women find them irritating. You don't have to use the vibe as a dilator itself, but just use the vibration to relax and give yourself an orgasm before using other dilators. The orgasm will help to relax you and your vagina, which will help associate dilating with something positive and therefore make dilating easier.

WARNING BEFORE BUYING DILATORS ONLINE !

A. Be careful choosing a set of dilators which doesn't have too big a gap between one dilator and the larger one in size, or the transition from one to the bigger one may be difficult.

B. The length of dilators is not important since it's the width that's usually the problem when inserting them.

C. Check your customs' regulations: We've been told that unfortunately in some countries (Saudi Arabia etc.), they will ask you to prove they are for medical use, they may ask you to come and get them at the custom and may open them in front of everyone or they may ask you to have your husband's permission first, to order them or to pick them up when they arrive... No comment...

D. Make sure that they will be discreet and not show the content both on the packaging and in the billing form or have them sent to a friend's address.

4. LUBRICANTS

Using lubricants on your dilators or fingers (and on your partner's penis) will be extremely important to reduce friction and make insertions easier. Although an aroused vagina will usually be wet, that will depend on many factors and you may not count on them, nor may you be aroused every time you dilate. So applying lube to the dilator and to yourself will be very helpful at all dilating stages.

Some sets of dilators may come with their own neat bottle of lubricants and it may work just fine for you. However, it won't last forever and you may want to know what other options you have. So here's a list for you!

CHOICE OF LUBRICANTS:

- Your own sweet juices: when you are very aroused, your vagina should naturally get wet enough to allow the entry of the tip of the penis or of a dilator without pain. However, for many women, their own lube is just not enough. After a little while it dries up and things can get uncomfortable. So that's why it's advisable to have some extra lube to spare, just in case.
- Saliva: again, very handy, cheap and always available and safe. But this too dries up pretty fast and it's not always that handy with bigger sizes!
- A lubed condom: this can be practical, so you don't have to buy extra lube since it comes with the condom, but make sure you're not allergic to it. They can be very slippery to handle.
- Olive oil/almond oil: thumbs up for oil, especially almond oil! It's not sticky, it lasts a long time, it prevents tearing, it stays on nicely and it's very slippery. But make sure it's not refined or full of pesticides and you may want to avoid it if you're prone to yeast infections. It'd better be organic and pure to be good. Be careful though as oil can stain clothes and sheets.

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- Flavoured lubricants: well, flavour should really come last in your list of priority. First make sure it's safe, you're not allergic to it, doesn't break latex etc.
- Silicone lubricants: they appear to be very good because they don't soak into the skin; therefore they last a long time but are more expensive than other kinds. They also don't promote yeast infection and are compatible with condoms (check with each brand though). But they cannot be used with silicone dilators.
- Glycerine-based lubes: very popular and easily available online and at chemists'. Glycerine has been used for centuries. However, some brands have been reported to cause burning and it may not be ideal if you are prone to yeast infections.
- Spray-on lube: If you hate getting your hands sticky!

What we wrote is just a summary of what the women I talked to and my experience was with different lubes, but you may want to check out this page in the ["A woman's touch" website](#) which gives more detailed information about which lube it may be best to use.

If you want to see what lubes LOOK like, here is a cool website that shows all the different kinds of bottles and packages of lubes existing out there, so you can choose according to style too ! :)

(Check it out here under the section "LUBRICANTES", yes it's in Spanish but you can just look at the pictures!) www.vaginismus.hu
As for how to use the lube, some women told us they put lube inside with a medicine applicator. Not everyone can use one but if you can, that can be very helpful. Some started with a full applicator of lube and then with time they reduced it to half applicator.

IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Oil-based lubes don't get along with latex, therefore condoms are more likely to break if you use oil and this is very serious. If you're just dilating or using vegetables, that won't be a problem, but be careful if you're planning to use it when moving on to intercourse. We therefore recommend to use oil-based lube only on a dilator, or to massage the entrance of your opening before or after dilating.
2. Vaginas will absorb all kinds of liquid we put inside them, (except for silicone lubes) so make sure that whatever lube you chose, it is perfectly clean, sterile, not full of nasty ingredients (like sugar for instance or pesticides) and if your vagina starts burning or you should have a yeast infection, stop immediately, rinse and change lube.
3. Whatever lube you decide to use, lay a towel on the bed so you don't make too much mess! (Some seems inevitable!). Remember that oil stains fabrics. You can also put an old shirt over a plastic bag to create a barrier that won't allow any lube to get on your bed sheets.

5. PRIVACY AND WHERE TO DILATE

For those of you using 'natural' kinds of dilators, such as fingers, vegetables etc, then privacy is usually not a big issue as you can handle those dilators in your own sweet time and nobody will ever wonder what they'll be used for in the house. Once vegetables are used, you can easily dispose of them in the trash or cut them up so they no longer look like funny penis-sized things.

One problem could arise if you share your bedroom or bathroom. Hopefully you can find times when others won't be around so you can lock the door and have privacy and time, but that could mean that you may have to impose dilating sessions on your vagina on days when you may not feel like it. See how that works, just remember to please not feel too disappointed if you should see that your vagina doesn't respond well to being told when to open. It would be understandable. You may consider putting off your dilating sessions until week/s when you are back home or the roommate's gone for a long time.

Or you may have to disguise the set of dilators, hide them under your clothes, put them in a bin for toys, get creative! We know you'll think of something cool! Then share the advice with us!

As for receiving the package at home, before ordering it we suggest you to find out from the seller by email or phone call whether the content of the package will be shown on a label on the package. They are often very discreet, however, you may want to check. Alternatively, you can have a friend (or doctor) whose address you could use instead of yours and you may prefer having the package sent there.

6. BEST POSITIONS FOR DILATING

You should devote some time to seeing how you feel more comfortable, before actually dilating. You may try this by keeping your clothes on, you will still get a feeling of whether or not a position would feel safe and comfy for you while undressed.

Some women don't normally like to spread their legs, they feel exposed. Legs don't have to be spread open for dilating to be successful. See how your legs do, if they are tense, instead of feeling bad, you can collaborate with your body until you find the position that will feel the most comfortable to you. That in itself is a great step to get your vagina's trust.

Dilating doesn't have to be done in your bedroom necessarily. Some people suggest that you should try to dilate in the position in which you'll have intercourse, but that only puts a lot of pressure if you just don't feel comfortable dilating in that position.

The bathroom after a shower, or the kitchen with some comfort food ready to eat once you're done, or the sofa while you watch TV could do just fine if you feel better in there.

Again, **THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR BETTER POSITIONS**, but we can give you some ideas that you can try.

One position that may feel very comfortable is sitting on a chair, resting your back on a cushion. You can remain fully clothed with a skirt, and then you only lift one foot onto a nearby table or higher surface. Or both legs on the table if that feels better. That's what some of us did and felt comfortable. Another girl used to sit on a chair faced backwards, the legs straddle it, the knees are bent and you can rest the feet on the rung.

Another favourite is to just lie in bed of course! with some pillows under your head or to support your back (or to elevate your bum). Or you can sit cross-legged or "Indian style" and support yourself with one hand placed in the space between your thighs and your feet.

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You can dilate standing up with one foot resting on the bed or on the W.C. lid so that way you can feel you're in total control of what you're doing, the negative side of these standing positions is that your body may not be too relaxed.

Once you find the position and angle you feel comfortable with, you can try the same position while you're undressed and see how you feel, and then proceed to dilating.

7. RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

Most treatments for vaginismus will include vaginal dilation and various forms of relaxation and anxiety reduction [From Binik, Reissing 2002]. In fact, as you can find explained in this Wikipedia article, one important component of any systematic desensitization treatments for vaginismus is Relaxation:

"One must first be taught relaxation skills in order to control fear and anxiety responses to specific phobias [...] Prior to exposure, the therapist teaches the patient cognitive strategies to cope with anxiety. This is necessary because it provides the patient with a means of controlling their fear, rather than letting it build until it becomes unbearable" (Retrieved from [Wikipedia: Systematic desensitization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Systematic_desensitization))

However, relaxing is easier said than done, but thankfully there are techniques to help out.

But before rushing to try some of these suggestions, you could just accept the fact that something is not making you fully comfortable and then validate those feelings. Find what's causing you the anxiety: is it purely a problem of tense muscles? Or are there worries in your heart that your body is mirroring?

Basically, if your anxiety is not purely physical, then it will be counterproductive to stress your heart out in order to relax your body.

You can talk about your anxieties with a friend, or your partner; if HE is the anxiety, the exercises won't change that. If it's an understandable fear of pregnancy or STI's, the exercises won't get rid of that. If it's a dislike of your naked body, the exercises won't get rid of that. If you are tense because you don't know your private parts well, before dilating or sex, these exercises won't get rid of that.

It may be up to you to do something to relax your mind, of course, but it is also up to your partner to help you get into a state of mind when you feel fully relaxed around him/her and under no pressure whatsoever, and no fear.

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Vaginismus and lack of sex is not cancer. There should be no rush to treat it and certainly there is no real NEED. So before getting into any stress to get rid of the anxiety, validate it.

If at some stage instead, you feel that your mind is free from anxiety and you are excited about the idea of trying out some relaxation techniques for your body, just like you would look forward to having a massage, then it's likely that the following exercises will help you and your vagina greatly to have anxiety-free physical intimacy or smooth dilating sessions. Give them a try!

You can employ these techniques before dilating, during dilating, before attempting intercourse or anytime of day that you feel stressed and want to relax your mind and body. It might be a good idea to try each one for a few days because like all things in life, relaxation takes practice! See which of these work for you.

We singled out some techniques, but women find that yoga, meditation, exercise, massage, acupuncture, or various other techniques help them relax.

One website in particular caught our attention, it describes a ritual of some sort, "a narrative journey to begin the healing of Vaginismus and other conditions relating to sexual trauma". The music in the background is very new-agey but peaceful too, with birds chirping away and women chanting, it's actually pretty soothing so it's harmless and probably worth trying... [The Healing of The Temple Door](#).

You may also want to check out this good website describing all sorts of Relaxation Techniques: [The Eclipse Lounge](#).

Do whatever makes you feel at peace can help you release stress and tension before dilating.

PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION:

We learnt this technique thanks to class teachings given by the cool Jon Seskevich (You can check [Seskevich's website on Stress Management Education](#)).

Progressive relaxation is a technique that can help you relax muscles all over your body, including your PC muscles. If you are interested in progressive relaxation we suggest finding a free mp3 from the Internet and using that to guide your first session. One is available here: [Progressive Relaxation Counselling](#) but there are various other free resources on the internet.

Once you get the idea, you can either keep using a sound file to help you or go it alone. To do this, you first focus your breathing using the breathing exercises described above. Once you are comfortably belly breathing, sit quietly and comfortably to progressively relax each muscle group. You can start at your toes and end at your head which what is usually suggested. You can also end up at your pelvis, concentrating your resources on relaxing your pelvis and exhaling any stress or tension. If you've never tried anything like this before, it might sound strange, but try it a few times. We bet when the exercise is over, you'll wish it wasn't! This is very relaxing.

DEEP BREATHING:

Try to notice your breathing different times throughout the day. You will notice that when you are relaxed, you breathe deeply and slowly and when you are stressed you usually breathe quickly and more shallowly. Slowing down your breathing can actually increase oxygenation and help your body to relax.

Try sitting quietly with your eyes closed and breathing in slowly and deeply, in through your nose and out through your mouth. You may let your mouth hang open or purse your lips and breathe out as though you were very gently blowing on a candle flame trying to make the flame flicker and falter but not go out.

As you breathe deeply try to use your stomach more than your chest to expand your lungs. This is called "diaphragmatic breathing." Men naturally use their diaphragm to breathe more than women do. As women we tend to breathe with our chest and may need some practice to figure out how to breathe with our diaphragms.

Learning to breathe with your diaphragm, also called “belly breathing” can help you relax.

For some people it is hard to figure out if they are belly breathing or not. To test it out, place one hand on your chest and one on your belly. As you breathe, watch your hands. Which one moves more?? Focus on trying to breathe into the hand on your belly. Gradually you should be able to breathe more with your belly and less with your chest. You will see that the hand on your belly will move a great distance as you perform belly breathing and the hand on your chest will not move much at all. You may be able to feel your body relax already.

Breathe deeply and slowly for a few minutes. You may choose to let your mind go blank. Or if your mind is racing you can try to focus it in on the sound of your breathing, a mentally-repeated favourite saying that is calming, a happy thought like the name of your favourite pet or your partner. You can try this before dilating or any time of day you feel stressed out.

TAKE A BATH:

Soaking in a warm bath can relax your body all over! Try taking a bath before dilating (or intercourse) to help your body find calm and peace. It is also a good time to practice dilating or other relaxation techniques and to put the cares of the day behind you. Turning off the lights and lighting candles can make it so luxurious!

But you may want to avoid bubble baths or powders and such if you have a sensitive vagina or have concurrent vulvovaginal issues such as vulvodynia or interstitial cystitis.

Some women find that it's easier for them to insert a finger in the vagina when they are soaking in warm water, taking a bath, however, for some of us the warm water may cause a stinging sensation and be painful. Especially if the water is too warm.. So just avoiding dilating in water if that's the case. Just enjoy your bath :)

THE BIG “O.”:

One other way to relax those muscles before a dilating session or before intercourse, is by having an orgasm or by getting very aroused.

Mind you: not all women will need to be aroused in order to dilate, just like you won't need to be aroused to have a Pap-test, however, you may be more relaxed and your vagina will be more moist and may expand a bit if you are, so being aroused can make dilating easier.

You may already know what turns you on, so just focus on things that have worked for you in the past, or experiment, by yourself or with your partner.

However, if for some religious principles or other ideas, you are uncomfortable with the idea of masturbating or getting aroused on your own, you can still dilate quite easily when 'dry', by making sure you put plenty of lube on your dilator and by taking it easy.

When you have the PC muscles all figured out and you are as relaxed as jellyfish, you can go on with the next steps with more confidence.

8. HOW TO CONTROL THE PC MUSCLES & KEGELS

The PC muscles are all the muscles around your vagina. You may hear these muscles called the pelvic floor muscles, pubococcygeal muscles, or PC muscles. They are the muscles that surround your vagina as well as your urethra and rectum.

They are the ones that automatically tense up and close the entrance of your vagina or along the whole vagina, as a defence mechanism, causing your [vaginismus](#).

You can learn to control them, partially, but if there is even an unconscious fear, they will do their job and you cannot be blamed for how your vagina should clamp down.

Now, relaxing those muscles is easier said than done. But if you treat your vaginismus through dilating, it can be useful to learn how they work and how to relax them.

Luckily there are some exercises you can do. The best way to get to know where the PC muscles are and how they work is with the use of... Kegels!

Kegels and the PC muscles

Kegel exercises are named after the doctor who popularized them. If you google the word, you can learn all about the history of Kegels. Unlike the above suggestions, Kegels won't help you relax your whole body, but they will help you relax and control your PC muscles, which is a great thing! But before you read this section, realize that it is a bit technical and some women find Kegels difficult if not impossible. Some of the authors of this webpage used Kegels to help with vaginismus, but others did so without doing a single Kegel. So if you want to try these, read on, but if it stresses you out, skip it! (For a story of a woman who treated her vaginismus without Kegels, see Cathleen's story at the bottom of the article).

During a Kegel you tighten (and then relax) the muscles around your vagina. On this website you may hear us call these muscles the pelvic

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floor muscles, pubococcygeal muscles, or PC muscles. It's all the same thing. They are the muscles that surround your vagina as well as your urethra and rectum. Two thirds of women need some help to figure out how to do a Kegel (Harkreader & Hogan, 2004) so here are some suggestions.

The first way is to sit on the toilet, start urinating, and then contract your muscles to stop the flow or your urine (Harkreader and Hogan, 2004). However, some people say NOT to do this. They suggest imagining that you are urinating and then try to stop the flow but to not actually do it while urinating.

(see http://www.med.umich.edu/1libr/wha/wha_kegel_crs.htm for more tips and information).

A second way is to insert your finger into your vagina, and try to use your muscles "down there" to squeeze your finger. If you are doing it correctly, you will feel your muscles grip onto and squeeze your finger. (Harkreader and Hogan, 2004). Of course, if you still have vaginismus, you may not be able to put your finger in there so this might be less helpful!

If you can't get your finger in there (or just don't want to) try looking at your vulva. Use a mirror if you need it. Sometimes, when you do a Kegel correctly you can see (or feel if you lightly place your hand over your vulva) your vulva contract up and in.

Some women seek the help of a physical therapist and a biofeedback machine. This machine gives you visual feedback when the right muscles are being contracted. Usually biofeedback machines are a slim probe that a physical therapist can insert into the vagina or rectum (Harkreader and Hogan, 2004).

Kegel exercises are now considered to be one of the main therapies to help with vaginismus along with dilators and therapy (Crowley, Richardson, & Goldmeier, 2006).

Women in the yahoo support group will tell you that they use them in a variety of different ways. Some people choose to focus on strengthening their PC muscles by doing Kegels everyday. This may work especially for women who have problems with their pelvic floor, particularly after

childbirth. These women do Kegels everyday until they feel that their PC muscles are stronger. The character Samantha on Sex and the City did Kegels all the time, even sitting in a restaurant because Kegels are reputed to make sex and orgasm more pleasurable! But be careful if you choose to do your Kegels in public places like Samantha did! One woman in the yahoo support group said that she was doing Kegels when sitting in boring meetings until she realized that while she did the Kegels, she was grimacing at everyone as she tried to concentrate!

My physical therapist, Katie, taught me three different types of Kegels that you can try. You can do very quick contractions (sometimes called 'quick flicks') where you tighten and release as quickly as possible. You can also do 'long' Kegels by tightening your muscles, holding for a count of ten, and then releasing. Wait a few seconds, then repeat. There are also slow 'in and out' Kegels where you focus on slowly drawing your muscles up and then slowly relaxing them back down. Try a mix of all of these and see what works for you. You can approach this like you would any other work out, do a couple reps of each kind until you get too tired. If you look around on the internet you'll find lots of other ways to do Kegels.

Doing a set of Kegels (even just a few) right before dilator insertions or sex can help greatly. In fact, my gynaecologist has me do a few Kegels right before he inserts the speculum because it helps relax the vaginal muscles. Not only does it help you focus in on controlling these muscles but it also helps tire those muscles out. When you do an insertion the muscles may be too fatigued to contract greatly.

I also do Kegels right before dilating or intercourse. By doing a Kegel I remind myself to relax the right muscles. It also helps me feel more confident that I can keep the muscle relaxed during insertion. "In-and-out" Kegels are great for this. Try doing three of these in-and-out Kegels just before you glide the dilator the rest of the way in. Some women also do Kegels once the dilator is inside but for other women this can be painful if the dilator is hard.

Even if you choose not to do Kegels daily, just figuring out how to do a Kegel can help. In one article on vaginismus, a doctor wrote that when some patients thought they were releasing their muscles, they were actually contracting them. Figuring out when your muscles are relaxed

and how to relax them can help with insertions and intercourse even if you don't feel a need to strengthen these muscles with daily exercises.

In the end, you need to find what works for you. Some women choose a structured path that would include a bath and breathing and progressive relaxation exercises, followed by a set of Kegels (maybe 50 or so), then a dilating session with Kegels during each insertion. Other women might just try some prayer or meditation, light a nice candle, and go right to insertions. The point is, don't let all of these techniques stress you out! Try various techniques and see what helps you calm your body and mind. Stick with what works for you. After all, it's your body.

Source: Harkreader, H. & Hogan, M. A. (2004) Fundamentals of nursing: caring and clinical judgment. St. Louis, MO: Saunders.

Source: Crowley, T., Richardson, D., Goldmeier, D. (2006). Recommendations for the management of vaginismus: BASHH Special Interest Group for Sexual Dysfunction. International Journal of STD & AIDS. 17(1): 14-18.

Try Reversed Kegels or... Coughing!

In the yahoo support group we often talk about "reversed Kegels" which as far as we know was coined in the support group for the first time. Once you get a dilator in, you may find that it is as hard to get it out as it was in. In reversed Kegels, instead of drawing your muscles up and in, you push them down and out. This is a lot easier because it's basically the same movement you do to have a bowel movement. So when you have a dilator in and it's not sliding out easily, try a reversed Kegel. This can also help you during the day if you are feeling tight. You'll still be learning to use the same muscles, but instead of teaching them how to contract and then relax, by squeezing and releasing, with a reversed Kegel you will actually push out first, a bit like when giving birth, try to hold muscles in that position for as long as you can or as you wish, a few seconds will do, and then relax and go back to their natural position.

To understand what a "reversed Kegel" is, try coughing! Some of our gynaecologists gave this advice when we had to insert the speculum and

it works just as well when trying to insert a dilator too :) When you cough, you automatically bear down, and do a reverse Kegel. Probably because it's impossible to tense the muscle when we're coughing.

So try and see if this is more helpful for you.

Either option, you'll learn a lot about where those muscles are, how they work, what they can do and how you can control them, so experiment and see how it feels...

Treating vaginismus without doing Kegels:

Cathleen's experience

Hi there everyone.

I've been asked to share here my story and my "alternative technique" to show how it is perfectly possible to solve vaginismus without stressing at all about PC muscles and Kegels, so I'll try to do my best, but please don't expect some magical alternative remedy or new techniques. I just think I followed my instincts pretty much... But I'll try to be more specific for your benefit.

Before reading of the importance of Kegels and of mastering the PC muscles in order to solve vaginismus, I had no idea that they were seen as THAT important. I had no idea they were "needed" at all... In my experience in fact, they aren't. Mind you, I think Kegels work perfectly well, I'm not saying they don't, or we wouldn't have this article written about them here. Of course they work for vaginismus, it's scientifically proven. But doing Kegels (and lots of them daily too) is certainly not the only road, and it's one route that personally I just didn't feel like taking.

I solved vaginismus without doing a single Kegel, except maybe for a few times when it happened spontaneously, just out of curiosity, I had one of the dilators inside me one day and my vagina grasped it tight and then released it (which, incidentally, was also the day where I finally understood how could strippers open beer bottles with their vagina!!)

That's all the Kegel I've done! :)

At the same time, my muscles down there were very much tight. That I could easily figure out. I was literally walking tight all day long. After being told in a support group that it was not 'normal' to feel so tight all the time, I remember I would try to catch myself off guard during the day, to see if my vagina was closed or 'loose', and it was always shut down tight, the muscles forever clamping as I now know many other girls' are too. So if I had to explain what worked for me, since it evidently wasn't my mastering of the PC muscles, I guess I would have to just use one word: "tuning in", kindness oh, and "stretching"!

Basically, I took my time to get fully in touch with my vagina. I focused on her a lot. I got to know her, studying her anatomy very well, I got to like her, to understand her for wanting to close down, I got to feel for her and to feel with her. Just as much as I was out of tune before, when I considered her a problematic part of my body which I wished was different, I gradually started loving her and considered her a part of my body I wanted to befriend, a part that was pretty cool, funny too, and extremely intuitive..

Having acted in the Vagina Monologues, I used the technique where you get to ask your vagina for stuff, and then you listen to what she tells you, to the first thing that comes to your head, and I still remember cracking myself up at hearing some of those intuitive answers...

So yes, I started really liking her and when you like a part of yourself, or another person, the last thing you want to do is for them to put up with something they don't feel like putting up with, stressing them out, insulting them.. You want them to feel happy and safe and understood, and that's absolutely what I did...

So I took all the time I needed to get on her same wavelength before dilating, and it was beautiful. To get more practical, I took a few months before starting dilating, I had no rush and I was glad nobody rushed me to start using them. I never liked dilators much, they actually terrified me and made me feel so cold, so I decided to use fingers instead, they felt more natural, but first of all I only promised myself (and my vagina) that I would be doing insertions (a.k.a. dilating exercises) **ONLY** when I

truly felt like it, when SHE felt like it, and when I was pretty aroused or just fully relaxed and fully in tune with her.

Not once have I forced anything in or done insertions against my own will or mood. Not once have I dilated when I didn't feel like it or without being fully on my vagina's side and telling her that no matter how things had gone, I would not be depressed or disappointed with her.

I totally disagree with people advising women to dilate at very fixed amounts and at least some days every week, as a rule. I went for weeks without dilating at all. It wasn't a big deal, it was no drawback.. I had other things on my mind, and on my plate, which I had to focus on. Some much more important than vaginismus for sure...

But everytime I dilated, (overall only 8-10times...) I took all the time I needed, I prepared carefully and took time off everything else, I was fully there, focused in the moment, it was not a duty or chore, it was something I ENJOYED experimenting. So each time my vagina learnt the lesson that it was safe to trust me, and that it was enjoyable too. Each time was a beautiful experience and I can remember most of those sessions in fact, because there was true collaboration between me and my vagina. It wasn't me AGAINST her, trying to trick her into opening by manipulating the muscles or giving her some medicines... It was just a collaboration, as between friends.

I didn't have to retrain my muscles or exercise them into submission. I didn't have to force my genital area to put up with exhausting daily dilating sessions or daily Kegel sessions which she didn't feel like doing. I just had to follow her lead and wait for her to be fully ready to experiment things with me, and only when I felt fully ok I would then try out all the tips and techniques I had learnt in my support group or from my gynaecologist (how to relax her, how to find the opening, how to move the dilators so as to 'stretch' the vaginal walls or the hymen painlessly and gradually etc..). I poked her with my finger, I soothed the burning after the first insertions, I made sure she could insert a speculum painlessly before having a gynaecological visit, I followed her lead when one day I could see she felt like trying a bigger size but I also followed her lead when one day it was clear that nothing was going to enter there, and I showed her respect and called it a day. No worries...

And it was powerful, and it was loving, and it worked...

The other thing that helped me was having the support of a partner who never saw vaginismus as a problem, since day 1 of our meeting.

I will never forget how his constant kindness, his unshakable belief in me as this good, cool woman, and his complete lack of pressure on me to "fix" vag. made my vagina open one night. As we were "just" talking, we tuned into this perfect flow of free and considerate communication, which made me feel so relaxed and understood to the core of me, and suddenly I felt my muscles 'down there' open.. indeed like a flower. And that's a cliché' imagery, I know. Yet that's exactly how it felt... I went to bed and fell asleep like a baby, completely satisfied as if we had had a sexual or spiritual union of some sort.

And after that time, it happened again and again, so as he says, it's no wonder I get so mad and uncomfortable everytime I read that men should be more aggressive, that they should exercise some 'gentle pressure' on us, whatever that is, cause to me what worked was his total kindness and lack of pressure whatsoever and his focus on my soul and my heart...

So we may fix vaginismus using a lot of other techniques instead, and exercise those muscles into opening by following a regime of insertions or Kegels, but I fear we'd completely ignore our vagina's messages to us, so I wouldn't call that "healing"...

I feel that I've healed in more places than just my vagina and it's been a beautiful journey, nothing I look back with shame, regret, sadness or any other bad emotions at all. Definitely not something I would want to forget all about...

I actually thank vaginismus cause not only I got a really good chance to get to know my vagina better than most of my friends do (they even ask ME for advice now!!), but because I have a new friend, and I'm totally tuned in with her and I learnt my lesson about not trusting people who don't put their hearts into what they do to me or to her...

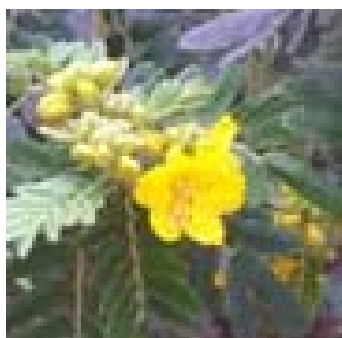
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Most of all, it taught me a lot about what love is not about, and the power of having someone making love to your soul...

So that's my 'success' story...

IN VAGINA VERITAS ;)



9. FINDING THE ELUSIVE OPENING

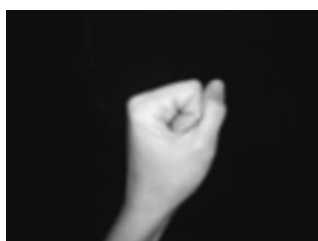
While some women with vaginismus may be able to use tampons, insert fingers, and/or have pelvic exams, other women may not be able to do any of these things. And that may not be due to feeling pain at insertion, but to the fact that you are not able to find your vaginal opening in the first place!

If this describes you, you may have wondered if you even have an opening there!

Well, if you have ever had your period, then there must be an opening. That's where menstrual blood comes out of. But it can be tricky to understand why something as small as a finger or tampon won't go inside.

Now, there are indeed some cases where a vagina has no opening. This happens when the [hymen](#) is imperforate but these cases are extremely rare. If after trying the next bunch of advice and taking your time, you should still find it impossible to find a way in, then you may want to consider seeing a gynaecologist about your hymen. But first, check out the section on [hymenectomies](#).

So first of all, try this little experiment to help you understand why there doesn't seem to be an opening. Make a very tight fist. Now try and shove a finger or a zucchini into the small crack between your thumb and forefinger.



Ouch... !

The vagina of a woman with vaginismus is not a vagina without an opening, but one that at some stage learnt that inserting things there hurt. So your vagina tries to protect you by clamping shut and that's what makes it feel as if there's no space to enter or that there is a brick wall blocking the way.

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If you have trouble finding the opening, and are unable to use tampons, then the smallest dilators of most sets sold online or provided by doctors and therapists may be too large for you. Again, remember the clenched fist!

One good source of information for me to understand about this secret passage better was the pages you too can read in the-clitoris.com website. Just be warned though: there are very graphic pictures of vulvas and of "open openings" (but not pornographic) , so please check out their [Locating Your Vagina and Reveal the Hidden Passage](#) pages here, if you feel ready for it. It can be very helpful.

Then you may want to start poking there with something as small as a q-tip (cotton-bud) or with your tiniest finger, or you can peel a zucchini until it's as small as you wish. Just make sure that whatever you choose is soft, clean, and well, LUBED!! (And be sure to put a condom over vegetables!)

The-clitoris.com website calls this first approach 'finding the path of least resistance' and we agree. This is how one of us explained in a support group how she felt about her very first attempts at insertions (with the tip of a finger):

"That's how I felt like back then: like sometimes it (the opening) just wasn't there or that it was hidden behind layers of something which I wasn't too sure i could remove, so what I did was just laying the tip of my finger there for a while, sometimes for a long while, just resting very near the entrance... and then somehow, by breathing more and more deeply, I could feel my finger getting sucked in somehow... what a weird sensation. I still remember how it amazed me to see that a part of my body seemed able to do that motion... I was in awe! :)

So, you too can start just by gently positioning your finger or the smallest dilator near the entrance of your vagina and just leave it there. Don't try to push it in at this stage. Just remain still, breathe deeply, and let your vagina get used to it. Then try to get aroused if you can, see what works for you.. If you stay in that position long enough, the natural pressure of your hand may actually cause the finger to slowly enter softly, as your vagina gets wet, opens up and your muscles relax.

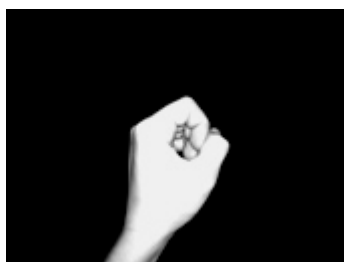
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If that shouldn't happen though, don't despair. After a while, you can consciously start pushing a little bit, very gently, and fish around for the opening. Change the angle or the position if you still can't seem to find it. Take a break. You will find it.

THIS IS ACTUALLY THE BIGGEST STEP... It will take some time and patience, but if you take your time here, then the biggest dilators may actually be quite easy compared to this stage. You are proving to your vagina that something can enter her without pain and once she has accepted that, it will be much easier to convince her that she can accept even bigger dilators or a penis.

At the end of the process, the muscles around your vagina will have stopped clamping so hard and will feel overall more relaxed, 'loose' and open.



Like this... :)

10. FINDING THE RIGHT ANGLE

Even after you understand where the opening is, finding the right entrance to your vagina with a dilator or finger can be a puzzling experience. It can feel like it is more elusive than the secret chamber of a Pyramid at times, but you'll be amazed to see that finding the right angle can make all the difference!

1st tip: aim low!

Whatever you'll insert for the first times, (q-tip, first dilator, a finger etc...), and whatever your position (standing, sitting, lying) try to aim straight in, as well as back, or down, towards your buttocks or towards the floor. That may seem strange, after all doesn't a vagina go upwards? Well, while the vagina in general points upward, towards the small of your back, you may find that at the entrance your vagina starts towards your buttocks and then rises. Pushing (gently!) towards the buttocks may also help unclamp the muscles a bit.

It may take some trying, but eventually you'll find the path to the secret chamber and after awhile you will be doing insertions without having to poke around for the opening!

2nd tip: new dilator, new angle!

It may seem a weird comparison but have you ever tried on a new pair of earrings and you couldn't find the hole in your ear anymore and you thought it had closed? Sometimes when moving from one dilator to the next, or even when having different dilating sessions in different positions, you can no longer find the right angle for a while and you may feel like you are hitting a wall again. Then if you try with the previous dilator or in the previous position, magically you're back to finding the road again!

We are not sure how that happens but it's not a big deal, just go back a step with the previous dilator or finger that you used and see if you can understand where exactly you should aim and at which angle. Then try again, it shouldn't take you too long before you find it again. Then, with time and practice, finding it will be very straight-forward.

11. HOW TO MOVE THE DILATORS

There are basically 4 movements you can do with a dilator inside your vagina or once right past its entrance.

RIGHT TO LEFT: This is the most effective movement to make according to my gynaecologist and to the experience of many other women. It gently 'stretches' the vagina walls each time a little bit more. (the movement actually just retrains the vagina's wall to stretch, since that's what a vagina is already able to do naturally). At first, there will not much space in there for you to move. I remember looking at my gynaecologist when he showed me with his finger how I was to move mine inside me, because he was making wide gestures and I was puzzled cause when my tiniest finger was inside, I couldn't move it at all, there was no space there... So at first you may just be able to move the tip of your finger a little bit, but with time that space will get wider... That's why we call this 'stretching' even if it's not exactly what happens.

UP AND DOWN: This can be helpful. There is limited space for manoeuvring up (gently pulling the dilator towards your stomach), and you'll feel that the skin there is less "stretchy." I used to feel the wall there (at the top) was much harder than the walls on the right and left, so I didn't like this movement, but everyone may feel differently. Pulling down, towards your buttocks, may help your muscles relax. You'll find there is more "stretch" in this direction. No harm in trying this movement but it's not as essential as the right-to-left movement.

IN AND OUT: Moving the dilator in and out is what many women will try doing because after all, that's the movement during sex, right? Well, the truth is that especially during the first stages, this movement may not be useful at all. For most women, the hardest part will be **ENTERING** a dilator, so once you accomplish that, you might as well enjoy the success and leave the dilator/finger inside as long as you can.

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If you pull it out straight away and try to reinsert it instead, it may hurt you or you may not manage to and it may depress you. So you may leave this movement for later on. Once the tip of the dilator has passed the muscles and entered into the rest of your vagina, you do not need to push it in further. The reason is that the muscles which are clamping down are usually just inside the vaginal opening so you can just focus there for the moment.

THRUSTING the dilator once you are past the muscles is not necessary. However, many women practice it for two reasons. For some women, it can feel good, as can the other motions included here. For others, because they want to transition to intercourse, they are trying to feel comfortable with thrusting. However, this movement is recommended at a later stage and not for the first insertions, but see how you feel. Remember, we offer tried and true advice here, but it's your body and your vagina... Follow her lead!

12. HOW LONG TO KEEP A DILATOR INSIDE

AND on Re-inserting it

Once you have managed to insert the tip of a dilator past your vaginal muscles, or even all of it inside, you may wonder for how long to leave it inside now.

There is NO strict rule or proven scientific method saying that a fixed quantity is better than another, so it should be totally up to you.

You may leave it inside only a few minutes sometimes, cause you may feel overwhelmed by the feelings or you may leave it in for a couple of hours while you watch a movie. As you wish.

However we discourage you from leaving a dilator in for too long, for example by going to sleep with the dilator in you. Leaving it in for too long may cause you an irritation.

My gynaecologist had suggested leaving it inside for at least ten minutes. After ten minutes your vagina will have relaxed some and will have gotten the most important message: "I managed to insert something in there, look, it's all in there and it doesn't hurt!! Yay!"

But one of us did repeated insertions for about 2 mins with each dilator and that got her to the point of being able to have i/c, so even just leaving it in 10 minutes could be unnecessary!

After that, there is no real need to re-insert it again. One successful insertion is already more than enough and you can call it a day without feeling bad.

But if you feel ok and comfortable, then you may pull it out and try re-inserting the same dilator in again. Obviously, since this method is called "[Systematic Desensitization](#)", the whole concept is based on making you less and less sensitive to the thing you are afraid of. So the more gradual exposure you have, the better. It's a bit like being afraid of flying and being on a plane going from London to Melbourne! The first take-off will be terrible and you'll wonder why you even convinced

yourself of getting on one of those bloody flying objects again! But after the first quick stop in Dubai, the second take-off will feel like a breeze, not to mention the third take-off from Singapore, by then you won't even notice you're up in the air again and you'll be sipping your tea during take-off!! :)

So, it's obvious that if you feel like re-inserting the dilators a couple of times or more, in the same "session", it will be good for you, it will desensitize you more.

But we are all different, so do not force yourself to try re-inserting the dilator again if you already had a good insertion the first time around. That's fine already... Enough...

If you reinsert the dilator, it shouldn't hurt, expect for the initial burning (if it's the first few times you're doing this) but nothing worse than this. If it hurts instead, it means your vagina had enough, so call it a day and stop.

If you want to try reinserting it the dilator, then this is some advice for you:

Some practical advice for re-insertions:

* Don't pull the WHOLE dilator or finger out. Leave it inside.. Slide it out slowly almost all of the way so all but the very tip is removed. Then re-insert it.

* Breathe or use some relaxation technique

* Add more lube if the dilator dried up (which will happen!). Then gently, slide it back in.

If you are still feeling comfortable and good about the process, you can repeat these insertions, as many times as you'd like. Experiment with what works well for you.

13. PULLING DILATORS OUT or REVERSED VAGINISMUS

From the experience shared by hundreds of sufferers, it's clear that many gynaecologists and sex-therapists seem to be under the impression that inserting a dilator (or a tampon, or a penis) will be difficult but that the removal will be pain-free and easy.

But, from the experience of many women I communicated with, it's clear that this is just not true.

In fact, you may be amazed at noticing that you're just as scared to pull out a tampon or a dilator, and that it may burn and hurt just like when you tried to insert it. It's not the rule, but it can happen and it's not abnormal, especially with the first dilators. We dubbed this experience "reversed vaginismus" in one support group.

So what can you do about it?

If you are using a water-based lubricant and the dilator has been in for awhile, your body may have absorbed all the lube. Try putting some extra lube at the opening or create your own lube and relax your muscles by having an orgasm.

(See the section on lubes choice for more details).

You can also try reversed Kegel exercises, where instead of clamping your pelvic muscles as you would when stopping the flow of urine while you're peeing, you do the opposite and basically push hard (as though you were having a bowel movement) while pulling the dilator out. That should work because you can't push out and clench your muscles at the same time.

Remember to breathe and take it easy all the while. Be very gentle, don't rush, (it WILL come out somehow), try to breathe deeply, add some extra lube and as you exhale try and push with your muscles and the dilator should quite easily slide back out.

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Also, as an emergency remedy, (for a stuck tampon too) you can always resort to inserting a finger in your anus: you can't contract and relax the pelvic muscles at the same time, so that movement should release tension in the vagina...

14. COMMON PROBLEM: THE BURNING SENSATION

The very first times you'll insert something small (a q-tip, the tiniest of your finger, the smallest dilator etc.) it is quite normal for the skin in that area to burn a little bit or feel a little sore during the insertion, while pulling things out or for a while afterwards.

A lot of women talk about this so it seems to be a VERY common reaction and a very understandable one, because of the muscles being stretched.

It seems to be part of the process for most women and since it's not actually painful, it's the only kind of discomfort that you would have to put up with. It shouldn't be excessive however and it seems to gradually become less intense and gradually disappear the longer you dilate and especially once you're past the first 4 or 5 sessions. If it should persist for longer than that, you may want to see a doctor, but in general, it seems a very common problem that goes away with practice so try not to worry too much and be gentle.

15. MAKE IT FUN

Dilating can be very boring or feel very cold and “clinical” for some women. If you feel that you want to spice things up a little or make dilating more fun, you may try the following ideas:

1. NAME YOUR FRIENDS!

Whether you use fingers, candles or sets of 4 plastic dilators, it could be fun to give each a name (your favourite male actors, the seven dwarfs, the names of your ex-boyfriends who don't know what they've missed, you name it!). It makes things more personal and fun and can help you see the dilators as less threatening and cold.

2. Involve your partner and make dilating part of your foreplay activities.

3. Have an orgasm before (or while dilating), or have great fantasies :)

4. If you like reading while dilating, there are great books of delicate erotic poetry which are both sensual, loving and can put you 'in the mood' without being gross or too graphic. Some good ones we feel like suggesting are 2 books edited and advised by the Wendy Maltz, a writer of great delicate books on sexual healing after sexual abuse, so you can be pretty sure the poems in there are all pretty tasteful and yet sensual:

- PASSIONATE HEARTS
- INTIMATE KISSES

5. Make a chart and reward yourself with a golden star or something more substantial each time you have a dilating session or move up a dilator.

6. Sing a Mantra! Say something positive about your vagina and repeat it. Use EFT techniques if you wish.

7. JAZZ IT UP!

Make a tape of sexy, sensual music for you to listen to while dilating. Each one will like different songs, but we'll just give you some ideas here:

- SECRET GARDEN by Bruce Springsteen

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- BROWN SKIN by India Arie
- CHOCOLATE by Kylie Minogue
- LOVE IS STRONGER THAN PRIDE by Sade
- SEXUAL HEALING by Ben Harper
- AMAZING LIFE by Jem
- THE SEA by Morcheeba
- Hindu hymns, New Age music, Classical music, sounds of animals...

They could all work. You're the DJ!

16. WHEN TO MOVE ON TO A BIGGER SIZE

Ok, so let's see if we can get very practical but without giving you rigid rules to follow, since there are none...

You will know when to move on and try a bigger size of dilators because you will **FEEL LIKE IT**. That is the best advice we can give you, if you feel like trying, go for it!

We've heard them all: someone stayed on the first dilator forever, and then in just a couple of days moved through all the others ones.

Someone else took her time with her first 2 fingers (pinkie and forefinger) and then one day she suddenly felt like trying inserting 3 together!

Or you may prefer sticking to a routine and spend a precise amount of sessions for each dilator before moving on, or who knows? You will have your lucky days of the month and you may only feel ok trying a bigger size on those days!

It's all ok.. Really. See how you feel, just don't get discouraged if things shouldn't work, because guess what?

You can always go back a step. It's not the end of the world, it doesn't mean "failure", it just means your vagina isn't as ready as you thought (or hoped) and since by this stage, you will be in tune with how she feels, you will just respect her, say "no problem" to her and do something else that makes you feel good instead...

Generally though, the day you'll see that inserting one dilator is no longer a problem, that the burning is gone, that the muscles aren't clamping that much and that you feel no tension or apprehension when looking at the next dilator in size, then it may be a good time to move on...

Just don't rush yourself to the next size. You need patience and gentleness to succeed, because real success means not forcing your vagina, remember...

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Now, obviously the more graduated the sizes of your dilators, the easier it will be to move from one to the other.

So if you chose a set with only 3 or 4 dilators, you may experience some problems moving from one to the other, especially moving from the 3rd to the 4th one.

If you are struggling, you may want to make (cut, peel, taper) an individual dilator into the size that could fill that gap or you can consider buying an individual dilator to fill the gap or a set of dilators with more gradual sizing (see #3 on Choice of Dilators).

If you are using your fingers, you can progress from your smallest finger to your largest. If you have a partner involved, you can have him insert his finger or fingers, if they are larger than yours.

You can also insert two fingers at a time though some women find this uncomfortable as you lose the rounded, phallic shape of just one finger.

If it was too difficult to insert the bigger dilator in size or if you felt pain, or if you had to push hard and for too long to slide it inside, then just please stop.

Don't push yourself to go too fast because of outside pressure. There is no deadline here and if you and your partner decided to have one, maybe it's time to reconsider that...

One good question to ask your vagina here is: "Are you ready to move on today?" or "Do you feel brave today?"...
She'll let you know :)

17. FREQUENCY: HOW OFTEN TO DILATE

You probably wish to be told which definite number of dilating sessions per week will give you the desired outcome.

It's tempting to make up such arbitrary decisions. It could even work cause you may think it does. But the truth is that there is no definitive or scientifically proven answer for how often a woman should dilate.

It is often recommended to dilate every day, and for a fixed amount of time each time, like 20 minutes or more, but not all doctors or therapists will give you a specific plan. If they do, such schedule can work for some women but there is no evidence that it is better than any other schedule so if you can't find the time everyday, don't worry!

Some women choose to dilate less often. One of the collaborators writing these columns dilated only eight times overall, with long sessions each time, over the course of a few months and overcame vaginismus that way. The trick here is that she dilated only when she felt in the mood and then focused several hours of attention on her vagina each time.

This approach may work better for women who don't like to stick to routines and may help you to get better in touch with your vagina and how she is feeling.

It may also work well for women who are stressed or busy during the week but have time and energy on weekends to devote to their dilating.

If you are more organized instead and feel that you work better with a plan, you can make up your own frequency and then come up with strategies to help yourself stick to it, or you may join a support group so you could get a lot of cheerleaders to help you reach your set goals.

But try not to feel bad if you felt that one day you just were not in the mood for it or if you were so busy you had to skip 2 whole weeks. You will still be able to overcome vaginismus.

Overall, try not to force dilating sessions on yourself, unless you really

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think that will help you. You will know when you are ready to dilate because although you won't jump with joy at the thought of having a dilating session, your body won't react with panic attacks, vomiting, trembling, headaches, negative thoughts etc. but will be calm, ready for it, knowing that nothing bad will happen even if your vagina won't collaborate because you will understand her and respect her fully and not do anything that hurts.

Remember that healthy vaginas are not made to open "on command." They should open naturally in response to a positive stimuli which is often not just physical but also emotional . Your vagina opens based on the circumstances around her rather than on tactics used to trick her into opening.

So if things didn't work out and you were not able to dilate every time you planned to do it, that would actually be a good sign. It means you are listening to your body. Your vagina will open when she feels really good about things. You have a cool vagina.

A good dilating session once a fortnight that you felt comfortable about, can be worth much more than a steady set of daily sessions which you feel negative about.

One good question you can ask your vagina is: "Are you in the mood today?". She'll give you clues :)

18. USING FINGERS AS DILATORS

Not everyone is comfortable with the idea of inserting fingers. Some women have a true finger phobia and are grossed out by fingers. That's okay!

Using fingers can have its benefits but it is not a necessary step to treat vaginismus so there is no reason to stress yourself if you don't feel comfortable using them. Other dilators will be just fine.

If instead you feel no resistance towards the use of yours or your partner's finger, this is some advice that may help you. The benefit of using your fingers as a first dilator is that you can really get to feel your vagina and its smooth texture and maybe feel the PC muscles grasping it tight, etc. Also, they are for free and they don't require any maintenance :) Finally, you could just use saliva on them as a lube in case you couldn't afford much else.

My gynaecologists taught me to 'go by knuckles'. So, you may start with using your tiniest finger, and just the tip of it and follow the same advice given for working with the dilators. (find the angle, when to move to the next in size dilator, etc...)

Then over a certain period of time, once you are very comfortable with inserting the tip, you can try and slide one finger down a little bit, maybe another knuckle, until in time you should comfortably manage to insert it all the way and see it disappear, fully enveloped by your vagina in a nice hug...

It's a great feeling to see that it was able to fit in there and painlessly. Then you can leave it in there for a little while or maybe try some little gentle movements right-to-left for instance (see "How to move the Dilators" section).

So, when you see that you can insert the first finger without any more pain or burning, you can progress to using your index and then your middle finger.

When your middle finger enters the opening without much resistance or pain, you may want to try and insert two fingers together, your index and middle ones, or your partner's finger.

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There is quite a big gap between inserting only one finger and inserting two at a time, so you may find it quite hard at first: an idea is for you to insert one of those two fingers first, and then very gently, without forcing, try and add the other one in, add it up basically. Don't insert them both together at first.

If you repeat that movement many times in the same session, you may find it possible after a while to insert the two fingers together. You may repeat this process when trying to insert 3 fingers together, but it may be quite hard to do that. That is probably the maximum number of extended fingers that it is possible to take when dilating with vaginismus.

Once you run out of fingers, then you can move to other dilators and either order some online or make them out of vegetables or other objects.

WARNING: sorry for sounding like your mommy but before inserting your finger/s please make sure you or your partner wash your hands really well, put plenty of lube on the finger/s and most of all: file your nails!!



19. PARTNER'S INVOLVEMENT IN DILATING

"Partners do themselves a favour and the relationship a service when they become involved in sexual healing in a positive way."

(from THE SEXUAL HEALING JOURNEY)

The [SEXUAL HEALING JOURNEY](#) is a beautiful compassionate book written by Wendy Maltz to help women heal from a sexual abuse.

Although vaginismus does not always stem from sexual abuse, I realized that this book had deeply inspired me when I wanted to write about partner's involvement in helping women heal from vaginismus...

I wonder why now, since helping women dilate is not the same as helping women recover from a traumatic sexual abuse, but I guess that book inspired me because the writer constantly reminds partners of the need to be gentle, understanding, and to let the woman be in charge and how working together can be a beautiful experience if both partners are doing it out of love and not out of duty or pressure.

I remember her practical suggestions and soothing words were extremely healing for me, so I'd highly recommend this book for anyone who is dealing with vaginismus together with a supportive partner, but in particular to those women whose vaginismus was caused by a bad sexual experience or abuse (physical as well as sexual)...

However, I am not saying you **SHOULD** involve your partner... Choosing to involve your partner totally depends on you. Research shows that there is no difference, in terms of final results, whether a woman dilates on her own, with the help of a therapist or with a partner. So don't worry if you should both decide she will go through this journey on her own.

It seems evident that if you don't feel confident enough asking for his support or if he should feel annoyed at the thought of having to help you out, this may be an example where your vaginismus may be telling you something important about your relationship and you may wonder if solving it for him is worth it in the first place or if you should first work on the relationship instead (or on ending it!).

Some women may have a very willing partner but they think that there would be a lot of pressure if he was too involved in the dilating process, or they just don't feel too comfortable so they prefer to do things on their own and just 'incorporate' him towards the end, when they try and transition from dilators to intercourse.

But if you liked your partner's help and involvement and he's enthusiastic about being part of this, then it will certainly be a beautiful experience for both of you and we just have some advice to give to make a deal that works. You can print them out and have him read them too:

Practical Tips when involving the partner in a dilating session

NO pressure, no threats and NO deadline from him

Unfortunately some partners will threaten you of divorce (or of doing other quite nasty things), hoping that will speed up your process. Well, it may, but it's truly sad and there would be nothing loving about that kind of involvement, so why even bother going through it... ?

YOU are in charge!

This is a golden rule. If he/she decides to help you out, you'll be the boss, and they may even enjoy being bossed around that way :). You should dictate when, how, in which position to try dilating and you can stop at any time. If you decide to use his/her fingers for instance, it's important that you tell him when and how and how far to insert them and how to move them. And he has to be able to stop without sulking (and if he's mature, he will be).

No messing!

You need to be adamant with your partner about how he must not mess with you while dilating, since that could make your vagina fear and close or hurt. For instance, a woman's partner had managed to slip his penis inside, during a dilating session, but instead of just leaving it inside as she has asked him to do, he slid it back out and then tried to reinsert it,

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which of course was too soon for her cause inserting something is the hardest part, and she needed time to just get used to the feeling, so she panicked!

So, if you don't trust your partner to be able to be patient, gentle and 'obedient', then think twice about involving him in the process.

You can try some Sensate Focus exercises before starting a session or anything that connects you deeply.

Remind him that just watching is alright too. Some couples find it a turn on for him to just sit and watch as the woman dilates. That's fine too. You choose the boundaries though. He needs to know that he is not entitled to a peek unless you feel like it and it is totally up to you whether you feel comfortable to let him help you or not.

If he accepts this deal, and they usually help quite gladly, what's important is that you set the pace and that he'll stop as SOON as you feel uncomfortable or experience some burning or pain. It's ok if you feel that you're ready to put up with a tiny little bit of discomfort, but the idea has to be yours. He shouldn't pressure you whatsoever into anything.

It's not his vagina...

20. FINDING THE MOTIVATION

This is a crucial issue. Unfortunately there's no shortage of reasons to stay motivated to solve vaginismus. Each woman will have more or less pressing ones. Chances are you will want to treat this and fast. But how many of these motivations do not come from you but from the society or people around you instead?

There is a real risk that as long as the motivation to heal is pressured upon you from the outside, solving vaginismus will actually be somewhat negative.

So take a minute and before finding a motivation to dilate, see who or what's pressuring you to find that motivation. It may be enlightening.

In general, there shouldn't be a big rush to solve vaginismus. Whether you are single or with a partner, the journey to get your vagina on your side should be a pleasant one and nobody else should be worth stressing yourself out over this. If someone loves you, they won't care how fast you'll be able to have intercourse, they'll just care for you to keep shining as a person.

On the other hand, you may feel a complete lack of motivation, you may be too depressed or pessimistic to even try.

It's understandable that the thought of failing (or of failing again, for those who tried this process unsuccessfully in the past) may be overwhelming, or you may have just lost a partner and think "what's the point?"

True, there may be no point, but that's the trick. There shouldn't really be a point, a goal... I think you would miss out on a great chance to get to know your body and yourself, if you decided to avoid going through this journey, but I'd be the first one to tell you to go do something else that makes your eyes sparkle, if the thought of dilating makes you feel worse off.

Also, please remember there is no need to dilate every day, so don't worry if you don't feel like it for a month or more. You may read a

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success story from a young woman who only had about 10 sessions, and often weeks apart one from the other, but who only dilated when she totally felt like it and for her own benefit and to teach her body she could be trusted (but also to learn to trust her body too).

So, stop dilating if you feel like stopping. Or dilate for yourself if the person you were doing it for was so shallow not to see the great journey you could have been through together. Just please, whatever you decide, try to pursue what makes your eyes sparkle! Ask yourself what that is and go do it if you can!

Life is your chance to shine, if you don't feel like going through this process now, you can put it off till a better moment or you can put it off forever.

People tried it more than once but only succeeded the second time around or only when they were truly ready for it. Timing is everything.

But don't place a timer on your vagina...

Choose what makes you feel less stressed and what makes you shine...



The Vaginismus-Awareness-Network's GUIDE TO DILATING
Tried and true tips and information to help you self-treat vaginismus

For more information, please visit: www.vaginismus-awareness-network.org

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