

# Instructions for Using Vaginal Dilators



- **Wash** your vaginal dilator with warm water and soap.
- **Set aside a time** where you can be alone and relaxed before beginning these exercises. See this as an important time, just for you. Play some music that YOU like, use low soft lighting, and perhaps add a scented candle or aromatherapy diffuser that smells good to you. Getting comfortable is an important part of this retraining, don't skimp on this.
- **Take a minute or two** to take some generous deep breaths. When we are in fear or in pain we tend to take shallow breaths and we want to start relaxing the nervous system with our environment and our breathing. Try allowing your exhale to be longer than your inhale (example: breath in for a slow count of 4 and out with a slow count of 6) Do this at least 5 times. Get settled in your body, look around and see the place you have made for yourself!
- **Apply** a generous amount of a **water-based lubricant** on both the dilator and your skin around the vaginal opening.
- **Select a size** that looks right for your condition or that your health care provider has suggested for you.
- You can **lie on your back** with your knees bent and feet planted, **or on your side** with your knees bent and the top leg supported by a folded pillow between your knees. Keep breathing!
- **Gently insert the dilator** into the vaginal opening as far as it will go without forcing it or causing pain. If you are having pain, gently remove the dilator and use a smaller one that will fit more comfortably. If you are using the smallest size then apply lidocaine ointment to your tissue 10 mins prior to insertion for your comfort.
- **Keep the vaginal dilator inserted** in the vagina and keep up your deep and relaxing breathing for at least \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

## More Tips

If you begin to feel discomfort, make adjustments to your environment. Are you holding tension in your shoulders, back, legs, arms, face? Focus your attention on relaxing the neighboring muscles of the back and belly and then imagine your vaginal canal relaxing as well. **At any point, if the pain is increasing rather than decreasing then slowly remove the dilator.**

Increase the size of your dilator once you have successfully completed the above steps with no pain during or after use. Once you have reached a larger size, consider using the vaginal dilators in different positions such as laying on your back, on your hands and knees, during deep squat exercises, or lying on your side. Your organs shift around the canal and the device and allow for gentle massage of the internal tissue.

Above all, listen to your body. If there are other steps or positions that are helpful to you, then do it! This is mainly about retraining the relationship between your brain and your vagina. Be supportive and loving to yourself as you go. Find ways to make this alone time something you look forward to.

**The Ideal plan for you is to do this \_\_\_\_\_ times a week.**

But do not let perfection get in the way of the good. Any amount you are able to dilate will help!

Find ways to cheer yourself on when you are making progress and when progress slows. Some days will feel harder than others, or you will need to use a smaller dilator than before — that is okay and normal. There will be ups and downs on this journey. Treat yourself with an abundance of compassion and patience. Know that this takes time. You can do it!

You can also add some movement to the use of dilators. Often movement is a trigger for pelvic pain, so gently moving the dilator in and out or in a circle can help challenge your tissues and desensitize them. to movement. Just like standard dilation it should not be painful.

### **Where to purchase dilators:**

[www.vaginismus.com](http://www.vaginismus.com)

[www.cmtmedical.com](http://www.cmtmedical.com)

[www.intimaterose.com/collections/vaginal-dilators](http://www.intimaterose.com/collections/vaginal-dilators)

### **Lubricant options:**

Choose a water based lubricant free from alcohols, glycerin, parabens, and propylene glycol. Avoid silicone-based lubricant if your dilators are made of silicone because it will damage the dilator.

### **Examples of good lubricants:**

Good Clean Love

AH! YES Organic Water Based Personal Lubricant

Slippery Stuff

Astroglide Natural

## **MAHEC OB/GYN SPECIALISTS**

Mary C. Nesbitt Biltmore Campus | 119 Hendersonville Road, Asheville, NC 28803 | 828-771-5500