50 Shades of RejuVAnate – Part 1

Since I am fortunate enough to work at the Advanced Center for Plastic Surgery in Timonium, I am able to witness the huge, exciting changes that can happen in women’s lives thanks to our vaginal rejuvenation procedures. And recently, I was fortunate enough to have my own success story with the RejuVAnate laser treatment. I may be humiliating myself a bit for the greater good here, but I am doing this because I think more women need to start discussing the fact that we don't have to live like this anymore! So here goes nothing…

Background on my situation: I am a 47-year-old woman with three children. I had my uterus removed in 2013 for odd reasons. But nonetheless… it is gone.

Even further full disclosure: When I had my hysterectomy, the doctor tried a procedure at the same time to help me with my cough-pee, sneeze-pee, laugh-pee, run-pee and jump-pee issue. This is common after childbirth. (Seriously, I am wondering why any of us decide to procreate!) Anyways, I underwent surgery and had a Burch procedure, where they tack up your bladder to alleviate the "dribbles." Needless to say, mine was unsuccessful.

Over the past year, I have become a pretty avid workout gal. These workout sessions were known to me as Poise pad-fillers. Every time I would start to run, and God forbid jump rope, I would pee myself fully and completely.

After my procedure, I began nearly immediately with painful intercourse and vaginal dryness. It always felt like I was burning, but every time I was checked out by a professional, I was told I did not have a yeast infection or any other issues that could be treated.

My urogynecologist basically told me, "Welcome to menopause," and "Best of luck." It was so sad. I truly had no recourse. I am a girl who thoroughly enjoys having sex, and this was killing my mojo.

My husband and I tried so many "home remedies" to make intercourse less painful. We tried lubricants, like KY, and believe it or not, Vaseline (recommended by the urogynecologist who wished me luck). We even tried Astroglide to try to numb my vagina for intercourse. It worked, but deadened any sensation. I even asked my regular gynecologist to prescribe me some Estradiol cream. This helped with the burning sensation, but never fully took it away.

God bless my husband, though. He persevered and got involved in the process with me, finding new and interesting ways to help us enjoy our intimate times together. He did a good job and I discovered many other ways to "climax", but I always felt like I had lost an important piece to my overall puzzle.

7/29/16

On this date, our office received a new laser that makes many promises:

\*To cure vaginal dryness

\*To relieve painful sexual intercourse

\*To firm and tighten the loose walls surrounding the vagina after childbirth

\*To relieve the symptoms of a leaky bladder (during coughing, sneezing, laughing, jumping or running)

\*To stimulate the regeneration of new, healthy, collagen-filled cells in the vagina

All seemed too good to be true, and I am a natural born skeptic.

We used a young model (or guinea pig) who was willing to let us train on her. She is a 39-year-old woman who has had children, and her main complaint was urgency and a leaky bladder.

The patient very easily tolerated the insertion of the laser and reported little to no feeling whatsoever during the treatment. As we were learning, it only takes one "pass" through the vagina for the first treatment. It should be noted that two to three are recommended in the second and third treatments. Patients are urged to wait for five to seven days after the treatment before inserting anything into the vagina.

The patient reported little to no excitement until later the following week. She said she had less urgency issues, and her husband reported feeling like the vaginal canal was a bit tighter than it was before. Score!

So, now I think I need to try it myself. Of course I do! Make sure to stay tuned for Part 2 of my 50 Shades of RejuVAnate journey!

50 Shades of RejuVAnate – Part 2

7/29/16

I had known for a few weeks that this new laser was coming to our office, and I knew I was the right person to try it. After all, I am our target audience, right?

So after our training, I had begun to think about ways to get myself treated: If I stand up and insert the laser, I could work the foot pedal and then no one at work would have to see me naked. Good plan, right?

Wrong! Thankfully, Dr. Fischer came to me and said, "Come on. We are going to get you treated right now." I was excited and scared, and not to mention, I wasn't waxed and didn't have my legs shaved! So be it. I got on the table and we handled this like two professionals (who have to see each other every day for work for years to come!)

Flashback: I had already been burning badly this week because I didn't want to buy anymore Estradiol cream if I was going to try the laser. I literally was in pain when the stream from the shower hit my labia and inflamed the burning sensation. Wiping hurt as well. It was making me so sad.

Flash-forward: I was able to lie on the table and take two passes without flinching. I felt no discomfort from the laser at all! I could feel the vibration as the laser fired, but no discomfort.

After we finished, I noticed that my vagina was "heating up." It got very warm, but not uncomfortable. I recalled that this is normal after treating other parts of the body with a laser; this is an expected result.

Within an hour, the "warm" sensation had dissipated. Later that evening, I got a thick, white discharge (that I’ve also been told is a normal phenomenon - I confirmed with Patient #1!) As the evening progressed, I realized I was no longer feeling that awful burn I had had for the last week.

It was at this point that I recalled something the rep had said during training: "When the cells in the vagina plump up, the pH becomes normalized." That's it! That had to be what had been causing me to burn so badly all of the time. My poor vagina was soaking in acid!  And that is truly what it would feel like. Horrible.

My husband vowed not to come near me for a full week to "give it time to heal." So I slept…

8/5/16

I took a shower and it wasn't until after I had finished that I realized, "Hey, that didn't hurt at all!" I gave my vagina the “wipe” test, and that didn't hurt either! Oh my God... Is this working?!”

8/6/16

My husband and I went to the beach for the weekend. True to his word, he didn't touch me.

8/8/16

We had waited long enough (not quite a full week)! The other day, I was ready to try to see if this is really working. Ladies... I can tell you beyond a shadow of a doubt that I am thrilled with my results so far! No lubrication was used, no pain was felt upon insertion and I climaxed! I almost cried, I was so thrilled!

I asked my husband what he thought, as I had not filled him in on everything this laser touted. He asked, "Is it possible that it feels tighter?" I wanted to jump up and down and scream, “Yes, yes, yes!”

I did still have a little bit of burning right afterward, but this dissipated within 20 minutes (unheard of previously). I wasn't sure if that was because we didn't wait the full week, or if I was going to continue to have an issue. I am supposed to have three total treatments (six weeks apart), so I will keep you posted.

Until then... I am a very happy girl.

8/18/16

When I had my first RejuVAnate treatment on July 29th, I was so focused at the time on how it could change my sex life for the better that I hadn't really realized the full benefit. I recall a time since then when I realized after a workout that my pad was dry. At first I thought maybe it was a fluke. Then the next day, my pad was dry again. I decided to drink more water and try again. The next day... MY PAD WAS DRY!!!!! The ultimate test – 100-count jump rope... Not a drop!! I am so elated! I feel like a new woman!

So not only am I having no burning sensation on a regular basis from a pH imbalance in the vagina, but I am also self-lubricating just like a healthy vagina should do, I have had a few incredible sex sessions, I am no longer using hormone creams and I don't need to wear Poise pads! This is all thanks to the RejuVAnate treatment at the Advanced Center for Plastic Surgery in Timonium.