Dyspareunia: clinical approach in the perimenopause

Graziottin A.
Dyspareunia: clinical approach in the perimenopause
in: Studd J. (Ed.), The management of the Menopause – Third Edition, The Parthenon Publishing Group, London, UK, 229-241, 2003

Dyspareunia has long been considered to be psychogenic. Opposite, it has solid biological bases, that need to be addressed in a more integrated and patient-centered perspective. The new International Classification on Female Sexual Disorders allocates the etiologic subtypes of "Organic, Psychogenic, Mixed, Unknown" in the group of Sexual Pain Disorders, that includes Vaginismus, Dyspareunia and Non-coital Sexual Pain Disorders.
According to this classification, this review analyzes the many different medical ("organic") factors that may cause pain and/or sum-up with psychogenic (psychosexual) and relational factors contributing to pain during intercourse, with special attention to perimenopausal patients.
A preliminary clinical approach aiming at integrating different biological and psychosexual etiologies in a comprehensive perspective is discussed. It encourages a clinical update on the psychobiology of the experience of sexual pain, hopefully leading to more satisfying and effective treatment.

© 2011 - Alessandra Graziottin Foundation - www.fondazionegraziottin.org