

Vaginal and Perineal Rejuvenation: Understanding Aesthetic Gynecology

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Aesthetic gynecology is a new surgical field that encompasses procedures designed to change aesthetic as well as functional aspects of women's genitalia following changes that may occur throughout childbirth, aging process, or purely for aesthetic concerns.¹ The definition of women's beauty and how it is perceived throughout the world have been influenced by an array of sociocultural views. Although the ideal aesthetic characteristics of female external genitalia still have to be defined, individual patient preferences must be taken into consideration for individualizing care and treatment; to the extent that patient-centered care is implemented thoroughly. The technique chosen should be specifically based on each patient's genital anatomy and applied with a realistic approach, to increase patient satisfaction and reduce the postoperative complication rates.¹ There are many physiological changes in a woman's life, such as giving birth to a child, weight changes, hormonal changes due to aging and menopause, all of which can change the elasticity of the vaginal canal, have an impact on the pelvic muscles, and reduce muscle tone on the vaginal wall. These conditions can lead to developmental disorders of a woman's urinary-genital system such as stress urinary incontinence, vaginal atrophy, vaginal dryness, and physiological stress that can affect a woman's quality of life, self-confidence, and the quality of her sexual life.

Various modalities are available to treat the above complaints which are included in the aesthetic gynecology category, starting from the invasive one, such as, labiaplasty, vaginoplasty, clitoral hoodectomy, hymenoplasty, labia major augmentation, and others, to the non-invasive category. such as, the use of energy-based devices, injecting filler substances, the use of physical devices, and administering topical hormonal gels or hormone replacement therapy (HRT) in the vagina.^{1,2} These two methods can also be combined to meet the patient's needs for achieving aesthetic genitalia. One of the most popular aesthetic gynecological procedures is vaginal rejuvenation, which sometimes includes rejuvenation of the perineum as well. Vaginal rejuvenation is a procedure whose main goal is to reduce the width of the vagina for functional and long-term health reasons. Currently, information about vaginal rejuvenation can be easily accessed and obtained, as a result, there is a significant increase in the demand for this vaginal rejuvenation procedure.

The surgical process of vaginal rejuvenation is known as vaginoplasty, which involves surgical techniques that range from tightening the vagina to correcting any damage or deformity found in the vagina. Vaginoplasty can result in muscle tightening not only at the vaginal introitus but up to the vaginal canal, where sometimes dissection is necessary to the levator and lateral muscles of the spine ischiadica. Vaginoplasty procedures also generally involve perineoplasty procedures, as they require realignment and strengthening of the perineal tissue as well. Complication rates of vaginoplasty range from 2 to 3.7%, which include dyspareunia, lack of lubrication, constipation, surgical wound infection, bleeding, suture rupture (usually in the perineum), pelvic floor pain for several weeks, and perforation of the rectal mucosa.³ Apart from invasive procedures, there are also non-invasive procedures that can be offered to patients. The demand for non-invasive procedures with the aim of rejuvenating the vagina is found to be greatly increasing among the public. This procedure can include the application of energy-based devices, injection of certain substances such as fillers or Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP), and the use of physical devices.⁴

Aesthetic gynecology as a relatively new field within obstetrics and gynecology is now gaining momentum and has developed into one of the most desired procedure by women of all ages in elective surgery field. This field includes cosmetic procedures to improve the aesthetics of the vulvar and vaginal region as well as functional aspects of women's genitalia following the changes that may occur following childbirth and aging process. In addition to invasive methods, the use of energy-based devices has the potential to become the main therapy in the field of aesthetic gynecology, especially

vaginal rejuvenation. However, further research on a larger scale to support aesthetic gynecology procedures is needed to be done by professional institutions, in order to reach the standardization of treatment modalities.

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