

Sexual function after fractional microablative CO₂ laser in women with vulvovaginal atrophy

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Abstract

Objective

To investigate the effects of fractional microablative CO₂ laser on sexual function and overall satisfaction with sexual life in postmenopausal women with vulvovaginal atrophy (VVA).

Method

This prospective study included 77 postmenopausal women (mean age 60.6 ± 6.2 years) treated for VVA symptoms with the fractional microablative CO₂ laser system (SmartXide² V²LR, MonaLisa Touch[®], DEKA, Florence, Italy). Sexual function and quality of life were evaluated with the Female Sexual Function Index (FSFI) and the Short Form 12 (SF-12), respectively, both at baseline and at 12-week follow-up. A 10-mm visual analog scale was used to measure the overall satisfaction with sexual life and the intensity of VVA symptoms (vaginal burning, vaginal itching, vaginal dryness, dyspareunia and dysuria) before and after the study period.

Results

We observed a significant improvement in the total score and the scores in each specific domain of the FSFI at 12-week follow-up compared to baseline ($p < 0.001$). After concluding the laser treatment, the overall satisfaction with sexual life significantly improved ($p < 0.001$). Seventeen (85%) out of 20 (26%) women, not sexually active because of VVA severity at baseline, regained a normal sexual life at the 12-week follow-up. Finally, we also found a significant improvement in each VVA symptom ($p < 0.001$) and in quality-of-life evaluation, both for the scores in the physical ($p = 0.013$) and mental ($p = 0.002$) domains.

Conclusions

Fractional microablative CO₂ laser treatment is associated with a significant improvement of sexual function and satisfaction with sexual life in postmenopausal women with VVA symptoms.