

# **SPONSORED SYMPOSIUM**

## **SOPHY: STUDY ON PH AND HYGIENE**

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### **VAGINAL PH AND SEXUALITY**

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#### **AIMS OF THE PRESENTATION**

To analyze the evidence supporting the relationship between vaginal pH and sexuality in the life-span.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Vaginal pH correlates with the level of estrogens in the vaginal tissue, the composition of the vaginal ecosystem, the vulnerability to colonization from colonic saprophytic germs. Factors that may modulate the vaginal ecosystem include Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD), inappropriate hygiene habits, hormonal status, iatrogenic conditions (excess or inappropriate use of antibiotics, that may select both antibiotic resistant germs and yeast colonies, of albicans and non albicans subtype; iatrogenic menopause). As estrogens modulate both the level of vaginal pH and quality of genital arousal in women, expressed by vaginal congestion and lubrication, pH could be a biological marker of vaginal sexual responsiveness.

#### **RESULTS**

Increase of vaginal pH correlates with reported complaints of vaginal dryness and dyspareunia particularly after the menopause, where a linear correlation is present between increasing years after the menopause, complaint of vaginal dryness and increasing pH. In randomized controlled trials (RCT) different estrogenic vaginal treatment have been proven to restore a physiologic vaginal pH and significantly decrease symptoms of vaginal dryness and dyspareunia. Other hypoestrogenic conditions (hypothalamic and puerperal amenorrhea) do as well show a correlation between higher vaginal pH and sexual symptoms of inadequate genital arousal, with vaginal dryness and dyspareunia.

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## **CONCLUSION**

Vaginal pH is a marker of vaginal health, expressed as tissue trophism and as biologic prerequisite for an adequate genital sexual response in women. Its measure should become a routine part of patient's gynecologic examination