



Vaginal Dilator Use After Radiation Therapy

Why Use a Vaginal Dilator?

Radiation therapy to the pelvic area can cause scar tissue to form in the vagina. This may lead to narrowing (called a stricture or stenosis), dryness, and reduced flexibility of vaginal tissue. These changes can make pelvic exams uncomfortable and may affect sexual health.

These side effects can be minimized by using a **vaginal dilator** or having **regular sexual intercourse**, which can help:

- Keep vaginal tissue flexible
- Prevent narrowing of the vaginal canal
- Reduce discomfort during future exams and/or sexual intercourse

Follow-Up and When to Start

- See your gynecologist or referring physician **within 4 weeks** of completing radiation therapy.
- Most patients begin dilator use **4 to 6 weeks after treatment ends**.
- Your doctor will advise you on the best time to start.

How Often to Use the Dilator

1. **Start with the smallest dilator** size that feels comfortable.
2. Gradually move to a larger size over time.
3. Use the dilator **daily for the first 2 weeks**.
4. After that, use it **1–2 times per week**, or resume **regular sexual activity** as tolerated.

Important: If you are not having regular vaginal intercourse, continuing consistent use of the dilator over the long term is important to help maintain vaginal comfort and flexibility.

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. **Clean the dilator** with warm, soapy water and rinse well before first use.
2. **Lie on your back**, knees bent and apart in a relaxed position.
3. **Apply water-based lubricant** (such as K-Y Jelly or Surgilube) to the rounded end of the dilator.
Do not use Vaseline or petroleum jelly.
4. **Gently insert** the dilator into the vagina, similar to inserting a tampon.
Always hold the flat end of the dilator.
5. **Move the dilator in and out slowly** for about **10–15 minutes**.
6. **Remove and wash** the dilator with warm, soapy water. Rinse and dry thoroughly.

Informative procedural videos can be found at: www.youtube.com/@SoulSourceTherapeuticDevices

When to Contact Your Provider

Call your healthcare provider if you experience:

- Bleeding
- Pain that does not improve
- Signs of infection
- Any other concerns

Your healthcare team is here to support you. Please don't hesitate to ask questions or reach out if you need help.
