



SECRET SUFFERING™

**64 Tips
to
Relieve
Sexual Pain**



**by Susan Bilheimer
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INTRODUCTION

Sex hurts. That's the bottom line for millions of women. Burning, stinging, raw, stabbing, and itching are just a few of the words women use to describe the agony they experience during sex, at work, or even when performing everyday activities.

Many of us are too embarrassed to discuss the problem. But keeping it hidden only makes you feel alone in your suffering. Sexual pain syndrome is a devastating condition that can wreck self-esteem, destroy relationships, and ruin your quality of life.

As a fellow sufferer, I've been to Hell and back searching for relief, only to discover that research is still sparse and too few doctors have been educated or interested enough to walk the long and winding path to help their patients feel better. However, with the guidance and expertise of Dr. Echenberg, I've learned a great deal about who can help me, what has worked for other women, and what I can do to help myself.

*According to the International Pelvic Pain Society, over **nine million U.S. women** between 18 and 50 suffer from chronic pelvic pain at some point in their lives. An estimated 90% of those women also experience sexual pain.*

You may be surprised to learn that it's not just problems within the vagina and vulva that are at the heart of your distress. Irritable bowel, fibromyalgia, a constant urge to urinate, arthritis, and many more chronic pain conditions in other parts of your body can all contribute to the debilitating and depressing sexual symptoms you experience.

In this booklet, you'll find simple, natural tips as well as medications and medical treatments

that knowledgeable doctors, physical therapists, and other healthcare providers are increasingly integrating into their practices with great success. But first things first. If you experience any of the symptoms described in this booklet, you must see your doctor to rule out acute diseases, infections, or other serious conditions before attempting self-treatment.

One more thing:

No matter how long you've suffered, it's important to be patient as you work to get better. Even in the best of circumstances, it will take time and effort on your part to experience relief. When you hit a wall, remember the Japanese expression, "seven times down, eight times up."

*So perhaps this is the most important tip in this booklet: **Never give up. Never lose hope.***

More and better treatment is on its way as women demand the medical community take notice of the devastating effect pelvic and sexual pain has on their relationships and their lives. We hope that the tips in this booklet will contribute to that groundswell of support and healing.

Wishing you the best on your road to recovery,

Susan



EXERCISE

- 1 Be cautious about routine exercises you may already be doing.** The pelvic region has many more joints, muscles, and ligaments than you may imagine. Some exercise practices, such as the use of stationary bicycles and stair climbers, may otherwise be very healthy for you. But if you experience sexual pain, these types of exercises might cause extra stress and spasm. “Toning up” may actually be a “sexual downer” on body parts that need to be the most relaxed and comfortable for those intimate moments.
- 2 Find the softest, most pliable seat possible and wear loose-fitting clothes when riding a bicycle, motorcycle, and even a scooter, or better yet, consider giving up these activities.** The pressure against your already-sensitive genital area can cause symptoms to flare up.
- 3 Give up the attitude of “playing through the pain.”** While coaches often urge athletes, young and old, to “play through the pain,” it’s vital to abandon this attitude when it comes to enduring painful sex as an adult. Many women believe that they must have sex to please their partner despite the pain, and if they don’t, there’s something fundamentally wrong with them. Nothing could be further from the truth. A loving partner would never want to cause such suffering.
- 4 See a Pelvic Floor Physical Therapist.** More and more physical therapists (PT) are incorporating pelvic pain treatment into their practice as the urgency of effectively treating women with sexual pain increases. In fact, a growing number of doctors consider pelvic floor therapy a vital component of a complete treatment plan for sexual pain.

Such PT’s utilize various methods to release trigger points in the body. Trigger points develop through contraction or spasms in the muscle groups surrounding the vagina, bladder,