



genital surgery

# female surgery

ADELAIDE GYNAECOLOGIST AND PELVIC RECONSTRUCTION SURGEON **DR OSEKA ONUMA** EXPLAINS SOME OF THE MAIN CONCERNS SURROUNDING FEMALE GENITALIA. TARA CASEY REPORTS.

Unlike our male counterparts, few women compare notes, or vaginas, in the locker-room. Consequently our knowledge of the range in form of the different parts of the vagina may remain quite limited. For some women, this lack of knowledge can lead to misconceptions about how 'normal' or attractive their genitals are. These misconceptions can lead to complications and inhibitions in establishing and maintaining relationships, as they deal with a lack of confidence or embarrassment, whether warranted or not. Many of us are often afraid to talk about the so-called 'embarrassing areas' of our bodies so one of the least talked about areas of cosmetic surgery is that available for the female genitalia or vagina.

'The function and form of the different parts of the vagina are closely linked to the female psyche and the perception of self in terms of attractiveness,' says Dr Adelaide gynaecologist and pelvic reconstruction surgeon Dr Oseka Onuma. 'Therefore, it is essential that the individual patient brings her concerns to her doctor, who should listen carefully and assess with examination and appropriate investigations to establish a diagnosis. Only then can the surgeon offer potential solutions, with detailed discussion about how each approach might impact positively and negatively.'

Many people are dissatisfied with some physical attribute, but often do not discuss it. All women are born with differently shaped genitalia, and with the effects of childbirth and age, many can suffer from problems with their

genitalia that can make them feel very self-conscious and unhappy, often affecting relationships with sexual partners. Changes to her external genital structures can restore a woman's inner self – in terms of image and esteem.

The kinds of problems are as varied as the women who suffer from them. They include protrusions or a lump within the vagina, scar tissue, discomfort or sagging at the entrance to the vagina. Oversized, elongated or asymmetrical (lop-sided) labia minora, the inner vaginal lips which surround the entrance to the vagina, can cause irritation and discomfort when wearing certain clothes or doing things such as bicycle and horse riding or during sexual intercourse. Loose or weak vaginal muscles, mainly caused through the muscles stretching during childbirth, can cause problems for some women and their sexual partners during intercourse.

'Childbirth can change the shape and tone of vaginal tissue, sometimes resulting in embarrassment and occasionally loss of sexual satisfaction,' Dr Onuma says. 'After childbirth, sufferers often try to ignore any reduced ability to contract the vaginal walls, the impression of looseness and reduced sensation during intercourse.'

Another problem may be female stress urinary incontinence, caused predominantly by an improperly functioning urethra. When a woman suffers from stress urinary incontinence, weakened muscle and pelvic tissue don't support the urethra adequately. As a result, the urethra doesn't maintain a tight seal during exercise or

other movement such as coughing or laughing, and urine escapes. 'Women with stress incontinence generally have a reduced impression of their own wellbeing and attraction to others, and this can affect their relationships with intimate partners,' Dr Onuma explains.

'In addressing any problem, it is crucial to ascertain what is really bothering the patient,' he says. 'I never make assumptions as the real problem may be more subtle than the one being expressed. I want to know not only the symptoms, but also the length of time they have been endured and how her quality of life is being affected. After a thorough examination, the correlation of the clinical findings with the symptoms results in higher success rates – both in terms of the surgery and patient satisfaction.'

☞ The function and form of the different parts of the vagina are closely linked to the female psyche and the perception of self ☞

There is now a range of surgical options available which can address and hopefully resolve these problems. Laser reduction labioplasty can sculpt the elongated or unequal labial minora as desired. Dr Onuma says, 'Labioplasty techniques can also reconstruct conditions that are a result of the ageing process, childbirth trauma or injury. The procedure can provide a youthful and aesthetically appealing vulva. The vulvar structures (including the labia minora, labia majora, mons pubis, perineum, entrance to the vagina and hymen) can be surgically enhanced, both functionally and aesthetically.'

Laser vaginal rejuvenation can effectively enhance vaginal muscle tone, strength and control. According to Dr Onuma, laser techniques enhance precision-reliant procedures with controlled accuracy and result in rapid healing, less pain and faster recovery.

The tensionless vaginal tape, or TVT, sling is a minimally invasive procedure during which a Prolene tape sling is inserted to correct stress urinary incontinence. It requires a short operating and hospitalisation time and rapid recovery. 'The Prolene mesh is inserted through the vagina and positioned underneath the urethra, creating a supportive sling, which is held in place by surrounding tissues rather than sutured into position. During movement or exercise, the mesh supports the urethra, allowing it to maintain its seal to prevent urine loss.'

'No woman should suffer embarrassment or feel inhibited in her relationship with her partner due to the appearance of her vagina or physical sexual dysfunction,' Dr Onuma says. 'Engaging in a frank discussion with her gynaecologist is the first step to alleviating her anxieties.' **acsm**

## Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation™

**SPECIALISING IN**

- Aesthetic and functional labial surgery
- Curing urinary incontinence
- Restoring pelvic support
- Enhancing sexual gratification
- Resolving menstrual dysfunction

**OUR MISSION**

To empower women with knowledge, choice and alternatives



**Dr Oseka Onuma**

BSc MJur MBBS MRCOG FRANZCOG  
Gynaecologist & Pelvic Reconstructive Surgeon



**Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation Institute of Adelaide**

Robe Terrace Specialist Centre Suite 4 Robe Terrace, Medindie South Australia 5081

Phone **08 8344 6085**

Facsimile 08 8344 6087

Email rooms@dronuma.com

[www.dronuma.com](http://www.dronuma.com)