

Impact of Post-Menopausal Oestrogen Deficiency

Atrophic Vaginitis (AV)

AV (also known as vaginal atrophy or urogenital atrophy) is inflammation of the vagina due to thinning and shrinking of the tissues as well as decreased lubrication

The most common cause is the decrease in oestrogen, which happens naturally during the menopause (the time leading up to the menopause) and increasingly so in post-menopausal women

Symptoms of AV

- Pale, smooth or shiny vulval area
- Sensitive and fragile vulval area
- Loss of elasticity of skin
- Sparsity of pubic hair
- Dryness of labia/fusion of labia minora
- Pelvic organ prolapse
- Itching

Oestrogen Deficiency

Oestrogen receptors are located in the bladder muscle and urethral sphincter

At the menopause, due to lack of oestrogen, these tissues may become atrophic (loss of elasticity and contraction)

Symptoms can mimic cystitis and therefore may be wrongly diagnosed and treated inappropriately. Oestrogen deficiency can lead to: -

- Dysuria
- Frequency, urgency and urge incontinence
- Nocturia
- Recurrent UTIs
- Voiding difficulties

Treatment: Topical oestrogen