



HOW DOES PROVOKED VESTIBULODYNIA AFFECT COMMUNICATION PATTERNS IN COUPLES?



PROVOKED VESTIBULODYNIA (PVD) IS PAIN AT THE VAGINAL OPENING TRIGGERED BY CONTACT (E.G., TAMPONS, PENETRATIVE INTERCOURSE) LASTING AT LEAST 3 MONTHS WITHOUT A CLEAR IDENTIFIABLE CAUSE (E.G., INJURY, INFECTION, INFLAMMATION).



WHAT IS THIS STUDY ABOUT?

PVD can affect the sexual functioning of women and their partners, making communication of sexual challenges key for couples' sexual and relationship satisfaction. We assessed how PVD influences communication patterns.

RESEARCH METHODS

We asked a question never explored before:

How is empathy and self-disclosure during a discussion regarding an area of relationship dissatisfaction associated with relationship and sexual satisfaction of couples experiencing PVD?

8 MIXED-SEX COUPLES EXPERIENCING PVD TOOK PART IN:

1

TELEPHONE SCREENING



2

GYNECOLOGICAL EXAM



3

PROBLEMS AREA QUESTIONNAIRE (PAQ)

that measures satisfaction with specific areas of one's relationship



4

VIDEO-RECORDED DISCUSSION

of couples discussing distressing issues



RESULTS

- The results of this study showed that empathic responses during conversations may be able to limit the negative effects of PVD on a couple's overall and sexual relationship.
- Targeting overall relationship skills in therapy may transfer into sexual domains by building skills for the broader relationship.
- When looking into clinical interventions for PVD, empathy is an important consideration.