



# PROVOKED VESTIBULODYNIA: A COMPARATIVE EXAMINATION OF MENTAL HEALTH, SLEEP, SEXUAL FUNCTIONING, AND RELATIONSHIP ADJUSTMENT



**PROVOKED VESTIBULODYNIA (PVD)** is a vulvar pain condition of unknown cause characterized by pain at the vaginal opening in response to contact or pressure.

**POSTHERPIC NEURALGIA (PHN)** is a pain condition that is a complication of shingles. It affects the skin and nerve fibres characterized by intense sensations of burning or tingling with and without contact.

## WE COMPARED:

women with pain vs. women without pain  
women with PVD vs. women PHN

## WHAT WE DID:

Participants were invited to complete an anonymous online survey consisting of sociodemographic questions and a range of validated measures on pain responses (e.g., anxiety), sleep, pain disability, mood, and sexuality.



## FINDINGS:

COMPARED TO PAIN-FREE PARTICIPANTS, WOMEN WITH PVD AND PHN REPORTED:

Significantly **more** symptoms of **depression, anxiety, and stress**

Significantly **more** **sleep problems**

WHEN COMPARING WOMEN WITH PVD TO WOMEN WITH PHN:

Both groups reported similar levels of pain catastrophizing, pain anxiety, and sleep disturbances

Women with **PVD** reported significantly more **sexual dysfunction** than women with PHN

Women with **PHN** reported significantly **higher pain disability** than women with PVD

Women with **PHN** reported **higher levels of depression** than women with PVD



## CLINICAL APPLICATION OF THE STUDY:

Women with PVD experience similar disturbances to those with another chronic pain condition when it comes to mental health and sleep, in addition to difficulties specific to sexual functioning. It is important to assess and address the biological, psychological, and social dimensions of wellness in treating chronic pain.

The information presented is based on the following publication in the Clinical Journal of Pain "Provoked Vestibulodynia: A Comparative Examination of Mental Health, Sleep, Sexual Functioning, and Relationship Adjustment" (Dargie, Gilron, & Pukall, 2017). Available at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28118257/>