



## Vulvodynia, Lichen Sclerosus & Pelvic Pain: Resources & Remedies

### What is Lichen Sclerosus?

Lichen sclerosus (LS) is a skin disorder that causes the skin to become thin, whitened, and wrinkled, and can cause itching and pain. LS predominantly occurs in postmenopausal women, although men, children, and premenopausal women (usually peri-menopausal) may be affected. It can develop on any skin surface, but in women it most commonly occurs genitally and anally, usually near the clitoris, on the inner and outer labia, the perineum and in the anal region.

It is most likely an autoimmune issue but no one really knows what causes it. A small percentage (3%) of Lichen cases of the mucous areas, become squamous cell carcinoma.

Diagnosis: often diagnosed visually, I recommend getting a tissue biopsy to differentiate LS from a similar condition such as Lichen planus or Vitiligo.

Typical Western treatment is topical steroid ointments (eg, clobetasol propionate).

### Dietary Changes

Dietary changes may be very useful in healing this condition. Avoid foods that cause allergies or inflammation. Try eliminating artificial sweeteners and additives. For some people, eliminating wheat and gluten may help. Herbs and foods that support digestion and detoxification (i.e. liver support) can be helpful.

### Healing Lichen Sclerosus Naturally

- **Comfrey:** Comfrey is a vulnerary – that is, it promotes normal cell growth. Comfrey is the preeminent healer of all tissues. You can drink infusion, bath in sitz baths or use as an oil or salve.
- **Calendula:** Calendula is a vulnerary and anti-inflammatory herb that is healing and soothing, making it a wonderful herb for all types of inflammatory skin conditions.
- **Red Clover:** Red clover is anti-inflammatory. You can also use it internally as an infusion or topically as a salve.
- **Plantain:** Plantain is a wonderful herb to help stop itching and reduce inflammation.
- **Root Tinctures: Burdock, Dandelion and Yellow Dock** (Recommended by Susun Weed – for details, check out renown herbalist Susun Weed's website section on LS:  
<http://www.wisewomantradition.com/healingwise/2007/11/lichen-sclerosi.html>

### Organizations: Lichen Sclerosus

Association for Lichen Sclerosus and Vulval Health <http://lichensclerosus.org/>

Living With Lichen Sclerosus (Sclerosis) <http://www.lichensclerosus.net/>

Lichen Sclerosus Yahoo group <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/LichenSclerosis/info>

## What is Vulvodynia?

Vulvodynia or vulvar pain syndrome is a multifactorial clinical syndrome of vulvar pain that creates associated sexual dysfunction and psychological distress. There is chronic or recurrent intermittent pain around the opening or just inside the vagina (vulva) for which a cause cannot be found, according to allopathic medicine. The pain and burning makes many daily activities uncomfortable or impossible, including intercourse.

Recognizing the four specific subtypes of vulvodynia is important in the management approach. The most common four subtypes are vulvar vestibulitis syndrome, cyclic vulvovaginitis, dysesthetic vulvodynia, and vulvar dermatoses (LS & LP are examples).

### More Info

- <https://www.nva.org/what-is-vulvodynia/>
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulvodynia>
- <http://www.vulvalpainsociety.org/vps/index.php/vulval-conditions/vulvodynia>

### Healing Vulvodynia Naturally

Natural healing approaches are based on determining underlying causes or contributing factors.

A very acid vaginal pH has been identified with some cases of vulvodynia. You can check this yourself using pH paper. A normal vagina should be 4 – 4.5. If you are too acidic, you can use a baking soda douche or rinse since baking soda decreases the acidity of the vagina. (Caution: only do this if you are actually too acidic otherwise you'll shift to being too alkaline and that causes other problems)

Determining if there is a 'trigger' for chronic, recurring outbreaks can be helpful; antibiotics are one known trigger.

One cause can be too-tight, shortened pelvic and vaginal muscles and muscle spasms and trigger points in your pelvic floor muscles. I encourage you to seek out a specially trained pelvic floor physical therapist as these issues can be addressed and symptoms can be relieved with vaginal and perineum massage and stretching exercises.

For some women the symptoms may be associated with Urinary Tract Infections, Interstitial Cystitis and Chronic Vaginal Infections. In this case, you need to determine the underlying condition and treat that.

### More Natural Healing Information

- By Susun Weed:
  - **The Vulva, Part One** [http://www.susunweed.com/herbal\\_ezine/June08/grandmother.htm](http://www.susunweed.com/herbal_ezine/June08/grandmother.htm)
  - **The Vulva, Part Two** [http://www.susunweed.com/herbal\\_ezine/July08/grandmother.htm](http://www.susunweed.com/herbal_ezine/July08/grandmother.htm)
  - **Vaginal Distress** [http://www.susunweed.com/herbal\\_ezine/March08/grandmother.htm](http://www.susunweed.com/herbal_ezine/March08/grandmother.htm)
- By Dr Gottfried: <http://drgottfried.blogspot.com/2009/06/vulvodynia-natural-approaches.html>
- Earth Clinic <http://www.earthclinic.com/cures/vulvodynia.html>

### Vulvodynia Support

Vulvodynia Support <http://vulvodyniasupport.forumotion.net/>

Vulvodynia Matters <http://www.v-matters.org/>

The Vulval Pain Society (VPS) <http://www.vulvalpainsociety.org/vps/>

National Vulvodynia Association (NVA) <https://www.nva.org/>

## Books

- *A Headache in the Pelvis*, a New, Revised, Expanded and Updated 6th Edition: A New Understanding and Treatment for Chronic Pelvic Pain Syndromes by David Wise & Rodney Anderson
- *Ending Female Pain*, A Woman's Manual, Expanded 2nd Edition: The Ultimate Self-Help Guide for Women Suffering From Chronic Pelvic and Sexual Pain by Ms. Isa Herrera MSPT
- *Heal Pelvic Pain*: The Proven Stretching, Strengthening, and Nutrition Program for Relieving Pain, Incontinence, & I.B.S, and Other Symptoms Without Surgery by Amy Stein

## LS, LP & Vaginal Lubrication & Moisturizing Products:

### Any Brand of Organic Coconut Oil

**Coconut oil** is both moisturizing and lubricating, tastes and smell great, is natural and has anti-inflammatory, mild anti-infectious and healing properties. Do NOT use with latex products though.

### Wild Weeds

**Genital Rub.** Organic comfrey root and leaf, wildcrafted chickweed, organic corn silk, organic St. John's Wort, cocoa butter, aloe vera, vitamin E in a base of organic olive oil and beeswax. [Wildweeds.com](http://Wildweeds.com)

### Avena Botanicals

**Yoni Crème:** Sunflower Oil, Coconut Oil, Cocoa Butter, Beeswax, Vegetable Glycerin, Almond Extract.

[AvenaBotanicals.com](http://AvenaBotanicals.com)

### St. Francis Herb Farm

**Red Clover Plus Salve** is an herbal alternative to cortisone cream.

Organic/Certified Organic/Wildcrafted blend of Golden Seal roots, Burdock roots and seeds, Black Walnut hulls, Echinacea Purpurea as a whole plant, Red Clover blossoms, Eucalyptus leaves, and Calendula flowers; in Gargano Gold Kosher Certified Extra Virgin Olive Oil and untreated natural Beeswax. [StFrancisHerbFarm.com](http://StFrancisHerbFarm.com)

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