

Vacuum-Induced Clitoral Engorgement for Treatment of Female Sexual Dysfunction

Presented at the Female Sexual Function Forum, Boston University Medical Center, October 2000, Boston, MA

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Introduction

We recently tested a small, battery powered, hand-held clitoral vacuum device, the Eros Therapy™ (NuGyn, Inc.). The Eros Therapy is designed to increase blood flow to the clitoris, enhance clitoral engorgement, and ultimately improve arousal in women with Female Sexual Dysfunction (FSD). The objective of this study was to obtain short-term data concerning sexual arousal with the use of the device in women with and without female sexual dysfunction.

Methods

A total of 32 subjects, 20 with FSD (9 pre-menopausal, 11 post-menopausal) and 12 without FSD (10 pre-menopausal, 2 post-menopausal) were studied. In-office instructions concerning device use were provided. Subjects were instructed to use the device with or without a partner. Subjects placed the device over the clitoris and adjusted the vacuum level (maximum 9.8 " Hg) for an amount of time (5-15 minutes) based on their own satisfaction and arousal. Outcome efficacy was assessed by a 5 item Female Intervention Index (FIEI) which subjectively assessed changes in sensation, lubrication, orgasm and sexual satisfaction.

Results

The following table summarizes the study results. Changes in sensation, lubrication, ability to achieve orgasm and sexual satisfaction were evaluated after using the Eros Therapy. In addition, comparing post- to pre-menopausal FSD subjects, greater improvement in achieving orgasm was experienced by (post-) 64% vs. (pre-) 44%. No side effects were noted with use of the device.

Evaluated Parameter	With FSD	Without FSD
Greater Sensation	90%	58%
Increased Lubrication	80%	33%
Increased Ability to Achieve Orgasm	55%	42%
Increased Sexual Satisfaction	80%	25%

Conclusions

Preliminary short-term safety and efficacy data in a limited sample of subjects with and without FSD revealed improvements in sexual arousal response in FSD subjects. This improvement in response is perhaps directly related to an increase in clitoral blood flow and indirectly to activation of an autonomic reflex that triggers vaginal arterial vasodilatation with increases in vaginal engorgement and lubrication. Normal subjects exhibited only limited improvement in sexual arousal. Further studies in larger subject populations followed for longer periods of study are indicated.