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The Menopause Society™
Leading the Conversation

Potential Tissue Effects: Microablative Fractional Radiofrequency in Postmenopausal Women

Pilot study explores changes in vaginal epithelial thickness and stromal collagen fiber size after microablative fractional radiofrequency in postmenopausal women

CLEVELAND, Ohio (October 20, 2026)—The menopause transition is often associated with genital changes, sexual discomfort, and urinary issues—symptoms that collectively are known as the genitourinary syndrome of menopause (GSM). Hormone and nonhormone treatments are available to manage these symptoms. A new pilot study explores histologic changes after microablative fractional radiofrequency. Results of the study will be presented at the 2026 Annual Meeting of The Menopause Society in San Diego, October 20-24, 2026.

In postmenopausal women with GSM, declining estrogen levels cause the vaginal lining to thin, lose collagen and elasticity, and become fragile and dry. The result is often painful sex and urinary problems. Treatment options include hormone and nonhormone approaches such as vaginal moisturizers, lubricants, and vaginal dilators. Energy-based therapies have also been investigated as nonhormone approaches for GSM. Microablative fractional radiofrequency delivers controlled thermal energy to vaginal tissue, creating microscopic zones of injury intended to stimulate tissue remodeling and collagen production.

A pilot study from Brazil involving 14 postmenopausal women with GSM evaluated the effects of microablative fractional radiofrequency on vaginal epithelial morphometry and stromal collagen. A trend toward increased vaginal epithelial thickness and stromal collagen fiber size was observed after treatment, with substantial variability among participants. Neither change reached statistical significance. Larger controlled studies are needed to confirm these findings and identify predictors of histological response.

“These findings provide a histological perspective on how vaginal tissue may respond to microablative fractional radiofrequency. Although the changes varied substantially among participants and were not statistically significant in this small study, examining tissue-level responses is an important step toward better understanding the potential effects of this therapy in women with GSM,” says Dr. Luiza Oliveira Mendes, lead author from the School of Medical Sciences of Santa Casa de São Paulo.

Additional details of the study will be discussed as part of the presentation, “Effects of microablative fractional radiofrequency on vaginal epithelial morphometry and collagen neogenesis in women with genitourinary syndrome.”

“Genitourinary syndrome of menopause can have a substantial impact on quality of life, affecting physical comfort, sexual health, and urinary function,” says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, medical director for The Menopause Society. “Although this small pilot study was not designed to demonstrate clinical effectiveness, it provides important information about how vaginal tissue may respond to microablative fractional radiofrequency. Additional research is needed to better understand the role of this therapy and identify which women, if any, are most likely to benefit.”

For more information about menopause and healthy aging, visit www.menopause.org.

The Menopause Society is dedicated to empowering healthcare professionals and providing them with the tools and resources to improve the health of women during the menopause transition and beyond. As the leading authority on menopause since 1989, the nonprofit, multidisciplinary organization serves as the independent, evidence-based resource for healthcare professionals, researchers, the media, and the public and leads the conversation about improving women's health and healthcare experiences. To learn more, visit menopause.org.