Vulvovaginal atrophy, or atrophic vaginitis, is now being called "genitourinary syndrome of menopause," or GSM, according to experts. Vulvovaginal atrophy, characterized by thinning, drying, and inflammation of the vaginal walls due to low estrogen levels, has been renamed. According to experts, the term "genitourinary syndrome of menopause" is medically more accurate, broader in that it covers all genitourinary symptoms related to menopause, and more acceptable to the public.

Genitourinary syndrome of menopause, or GSM, is defined as a collection of symptoms and signs associated with age-related decreases in estrogen and other sex steroid levels that affect the labia majora/minora, clitoris, vestibule/introitus, vagina, urethra, and bladder. GSM may include genital symptoms of vaginal dryness, burning, and irritation; sexual symptoms of lack of lubrication, discomfort or pain, and impaired function; and urinary symptoms of urgency, dysuria (painful urinary), and recurrent urinary tract infections. According to the article, for a diagnosis of GSM, women must present with some or all of the signs and symptoms, which must be bothersome and not accounted for by another diagnosis. The experts who reviewed the terminology and suggested this change are associated with the International Society for Sexual Medicine, The North American Menopause Society, the International Menopause Society, and the European Menopause and Andropause Society. A more in depth explanation of why experts recommended this change is available here.

References:

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