

## Why Women Request Labiaplasty

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**INTRODUCTION:** Over the past five years, labiaplasty has jumped in popularity, yet in 2007, the Committee on Gynecological Practice under the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists published a formal position paper on vaginal rejuvenation and cosmetic vaginal procedures in which they stated, "Absence of data supporting the safety and efficacy of these procedures makes their recommendation untenable."<sup>1</sup> The multifactorial reasons for having labiaplasty are not yet accepted by many physicians, limiting patient access to surgical relief.<sup>2</sup>

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:** In this prospective study, 50 consecutive patients consulting about labiaplasty in a two-plastic-surgeon practice were given a questionnaire asking about psychological and appearance-related symptoms.

**RESULTS:** The mean patient age was 33.5, with a range of 17 – 51. Fifty-eight percent of women had given birth, and 42% were nulliparous. Half (52%) noticed their labia become elongated as they got older, and nearly all (93%), had bilateral elongation.

When asked about physical symptoms, over half of the fifty patients experienced tugging during intercourse, found tight pants uncomfortable, experienced twisting of the labia, and noted that their labia were visible in yoga pants. Nearly half (48%) experienced pain during intercourse, and 40% said their labia could become exposed in bathing suits.

Regarding appearance, nearly all (94%) patients were self-conscious, and over half felt less attractive to their partner, experienced restricted choice of clothing, and noted a negative impact on both self-esteem and intimacy.

All 50 patients experienced at least one symptom, and 92% experienced four or more.

**CONCLUSION:** The motivation for labiaplasty is multifactorial, with most women complaining of both physical and appearance-related symptoms related to the length of their labia. The more physicians understand the symptomatology associated elongated labia, the better supported patients will feel in their search for relief.

## REFERENCES:

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