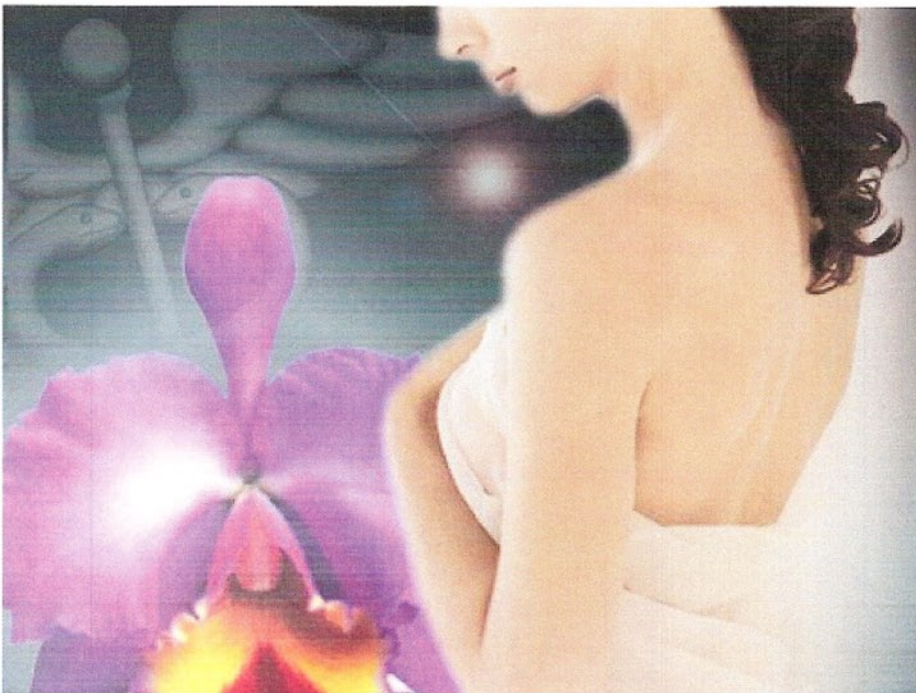


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Intimate Operations: OB-GYN Organization Issues Warning

ACOG Opinion Stirs Debate Over Risks, Benefits of Procedures Like 'Revirgination'



The growing trend of women going under the knife for "designer vaginas" has some doctors worried. (AP Photo/Photo Disc)

By **DAN CHILDS**
ABC News Medical Unit
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Dr. Erin Tracy was surprised when a teenage patient came to her gynecological practice to request a surgical procedure.

Her young patient wanted a more attractive vagina. The girl sought labiaplasty — a procedure to trim down and shape the inner or outer lips of the

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vagina, often for cosmetic purposes.

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"She came in specifically to ask me to perform this procedure because a girlfriend of hers had had this done as well," said Tracy, an attending physician at Massachusetts General Hospital and an assistant professor of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive biology at Harvard University.

Such requests are becoming more common. Procedures including "vaginal rejuvenation," "designer vaginoplasty," "revirgination" and "G-spot amplification" are rapidly gaining popularity.

Television shows, as seen in a recent episode of Showtime's "Californication," have spurred such requests. Other times, it's word of mouth.

"In talking with my colleagues, I hear more and more anecdotal trends of this happening," she said.

The trend toward cosmetic vaginal enhancement prompted the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists to issue a committee opinion today with a warning on the procedures.

Such procedures are not "accepted and routine surgical practices," the opinion reads. "Absence of data supporting the safety and efficacy of these procedures makes their recommendation untenable."

While doctors who perform these surgeries agree that only those with the proper training and expertise should be allowed to conduct them, they say that for many women the operations can relieve them of both physical and emotional anguish.

"Women have gone so far as to say, 'Doctor, I have a penis.' How can your heart not go out to them?" asked Dr. John Miklos, director of the Atlanta Urogynecology Associates, Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation Institute of Atlanta Medical Research Institute.

Miklos, whose clinic offers several of the procedures described, said that a key step is ensuring that women are fully aware of the balance between risk and benefit of the surgery.



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