



Vulvovaginal Health Fellowship

Training Competencies

Medical Expert

Knowledge

- Knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the vulva and vagina.
- Knowledge of skin layers
- Knowledge of examination techniques: colposcopy, biopsy techniques, local anesthetic properties and preparation.
- Knowledge of the changes in the vulva and vagina across a woman's lifespan and awareness of the physiological versus pathological appearances.
- Knowledge of benign, pre-malignant and malignant disorders of the vulva.
- Knowledge to identify and treat a variety of dermatologic conditions that affect the vulva
- Knowledge of the risks and treatment of Graft Versus Host Disease
- Recognize risk factors for lower genital tract dysplasia (eg. Smoking, Immunosuppression).
- Knowledge of the negative impact of vulvar disorders on a woman's and her partner's quality of life.

Clinical skills

- Being able to take a focused and detailed relevant history for vulvar dermatologic and pain conditions.
- Detail the effects of vulvovaginal disorders on various aspects of quality of life.
- Given a woman presenting with a vulvar concern (symptoms, or lesions); be proficient in performing a sensitive genital and pelvic examination.
- Apply techniques and strategies to reduce a woman's anxiety and or physical discomfort during exams and biopsies
- Perform a systematic and thorough examination of the external genitalia (vulvar, perineum, perianal areas) including all mucocutaneous surfaces (assessing skin, anatomy, inflammation, and/or lesions).
- Apply correct dermatological terms when describing lesions and generating a differential diagnosis.
- Perform a Q-tip test to assess vulvar pain
- Perform a speculum exam and colposcopy of the vagina and cervix as appropriate.



- Assess the patient's pelvic floor including resting tone, tenderness, reflexive vaginismus, and ability to voluntarily contract and relax the pelvic floor
- Given a clinical assessment that excludes organic causes for a woman's chronic pain, generate a working clinical diagnosis and classify her vulvar pain according to recent ISSVD terminology.
- Counsel and educate a woman with a vulvar disorder regarding the etiology, and natural history of the disorder.
- Counsel regarding skin care and vulvar symptom management.
- Outline a comprehensive therapeutic approach to address a patient's quality of life concerns as well as disease management of a chronic vulvar disorder.
- For each therapeutic intervention be able to counsel a patient regarding:
 - What the therapy is;
 - How it works (mechanism of action);
 - Likelihood of success;
 - Benefits;
 - Risks;
 - Side effects; and the
 - Natural history of the disease if the patient decides not to pursue any therapy.
- Specifically, counsel a patient on how to use topical steroid therapy appropriately.
- Specifically, counsel a postmenopausal woman on how to use local estrogen therapy appropriately.
- Recognize and address factors that affect patient adherence to medical therapy.
Counsel a patient on how to use of vaginal inserts to address associated vaginismus.
- Appropriately refer patients to physiotherapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, etc as needed to optimize disease management
- Obtain consent for photo documentation of conditions
- *Technical skills*
 - Colposcopy of the lower genital tract
 - Skin biopsy techniques (snip, slice, punch, elliptical)
 - Administer local anaesthetic
 - Determine where and what technique to use to obtain sample
 - Control bleeding



- Photographic documentation of vulvar lesions

Procedural skills (Gynecology) – (while there may be opportunity to participate in the following procedures; we cannot guarantee exposure to all procedures during training). The candidate should be familiar with the indications for each procedure and the steps of each procedure.)

- Excision of precancerous vulvar lesions
- Excision of benign vulvar masses (eg. Sebaceous cysts, etc)
- Electrocautery/excision/laser vaporization of genital warts
- Laser vaporization (CO2) of vulvar and vaginal lesions
- Lysis of adhesions in the vulva/vagina

Communicator

- Be able to convey patients' diagnoses, prognosis, management/treatment plans and follow up in a comprehensive and empathetic fashion.
- Be able to explain procedures clearly and obtain informed consent
- Accurately answer patient questions within the trainee's knowledge level and defer to staff when beyond the resident's level of training.
- Establish therapeutic relationships with patients and their partners.
- Communicate effectively with other team members.
- Demonstrate excellent record keeping.
- Compose clear and concise consultation letter to the referring physician in a timely manner

Collaborator

- Include patient and their family/partners in treatment and treatment planning as deemed appropriate.
- Consult and discuss patient cases appropriately with other physicians and health care professionals.
- Be effectiveness in liaising with colleagues in other disciplines, particularly dermatology, genitourinary medicine, pain clinic, physiotherapy and sex therapy.
- Contribute effectively to interdisciplinary team activities i
- Participating in research projects in collaboration with the supervising clinician.

Manager

- Utilize resources (eg. the multidisciplinary team members) effectively to balance patient care, learning needs, and outside activities.



- Demonstrate understanding of the need to allocate finite health care resources responsibly.

Health Advocate

- Identify important determinants of health affecting patients with vulvar disorders.
- Recognize the role of the physician as an advocate for those issues.

Scholar

- Complete readings from an assigned reading list on vulvar disorders, and access relevant up to date literature in helping to resolve clinical problems. This includes reading patient handouts, reviewing the vulvovaginaldisorders.com curriculum, relevant review and research articles, clinical care guidelines, any recommended textbooks, and podcasts.
- Complete a basic and/or advanced formal training program in Colposcopy/Advanced Vulvar Disorders. (ISSVD, ASSCP, online courses)
- Critically appraise sources of scholarly information on vulvar disorders.
- Deliver one Grand Rounds CME presentation on vulvar disorders.
- Complete a research project and present and/or publish the findings at a National/International Meeting.

Professional

- Deliver the highest quality care with integrity, honesty and compassion.
- Exhibit appropriate personal and interpersonal professional behaviours.
- Practice medicine ethically and in a manner consistent with the obligations of a physician.
- Awareness of data storage and protection requirements.
- Awareness of patient privacy concerns regarding digital photography