

ABC7 On Call: Vaginal Rejuvenation

(New York-WABC, May 21, 2003) — The joy of sex after childbirth. There is now a procedure that promises to help solve a common problem. ABC7's Dr. Jay Adlersberg is On Call with the details.

There is a joy that many couples feel with an expanded family. But for some women, that joy comes with something else that is expanded during childbirth. The birth canal itself is stretched as the baby is born. The result can be weakened muscles in the vagina, and less stimulation for partners during sex later on.

Jennifer Hernandez, Mother: "It wasn't the same as before I had kids. I just wanted it to be the same as before I had children."

Now, a medical procedure called laser vaginal rejuvenation is offering help for women like Ms. Hernandez. Basically, it's more than cosmetic surgery, you might call it sexual enhancement surgery.

Dr. David Matlock, Gynecologist: "We're tightening the muscles of the upper part of the vagina, the lower part of the vagina, and the outside and by doing this, we can enhance sexual gratification."

Working through the vaginal opening, the doctor first tightens the outer vaginal muscles, then the inner muscles, and finally the muscles surrounding the vaginal opening. The result is increased friction for both partners during intercourse.

The surgery is done as an outpatient procedure, and patients can go home on painkillers afterward. Jennifer Hernandez's recovery took about a week.

Gynecologist Gil Levy cautions that surgeons must have experience in this surgery to avoid nerve damage in the sensitive vaginal area. He says the advent of surgery like this is not surprising.

Dr. Gil Levy, Maimonides Medical Center: "I think that the fact that Viagra came to the market about ten years ago, definitely increased the awareness of sexual function at a later age."

Jennifer and her husband decided on the surgery together. In the

end, it was her decision.

Jennifer Hernandez: "I think women have a right to feel like they can do this for themselves. If it's out there, hey why not? Why not do it and feel better about yourself."

The cost of the surgery: about \$6,000 to \$8,000.