**Absorption**
The transformation of radiant energy to another form of energy (usually heat) by interacting with matter.

**Chromophore**
Endogenous light-absorbing chemicals, which absorb light of a specific wavelength.

**Collagen**
As the most abundant protein in the human body, it is regarded as the substance that holds the whole body together and can be found in the bones, muscles, skin and tendons. Collagen, elastin and hyaluronic acid form the “building blocks” of the skin.

**Condyloma**
An infection of the genitals. There are two subtypes: Condyloma acuminata, or genital warts, caused by human papilloma virus subtypes 6, 11, and others or Condylomata lata, white lesions associated with secondary syphilis.

**Denature**
To destroy the characteristic properties of a protein (like collagen or elastin) by heat. Proteins can be completely or partially denatured, as a result of various degrees of heating.

**Dyspareunia**
Painful sexual intercourse due to medical or psychological causes.

**Dysuria**
Painful or difficult urination.

**Elastin**
A protein in connective tissue that is elastic and allows many tissues in the body to resume their shape after stretching or contracting. Elastin helps skin to return to its original position when it is poked or pinched.

**Energy fluence**
The energy contained within light is expressed in Joules (J). The energy fluence determines the amount of laser energy delivered in a single pulse and is expressed in Joules/cm².

**Fractional skin resurfacing**
An ablation and coagulation process by which thermal wounds are created in a nonhomogeneous fractional form in tissue.

**Genital beautification**
Aesthetic female genital surgery techniques to modify the appearance of the vagina and its structures. Techniques include: labia minora reduction, labia majora augmentation by autologous fat transplantation, labial brightening by laser, mons pubis (rounded mass of fatty tissue lying over joint of pubis bones) reduction by liposuction, and vaginal tightening.

**Genital rejuvenation (also referred to as vaginal rejuvenation)***
Surgical procedures to help tighten and support the vagina and its structures. Laser resurfacing can also be used to modify the cosmetic appearance of the vulva (sagging skin, pigmentation, texture).

**Genital warts (also referred to as condylomata acuminate)**
Skin lesions of the genital, perineal and anal areas and one of the most common types of sexually transmitted infections.
**Introitus**
Entrance to the vaginal canal.

**Labia**
Lip-like structures of the female genitalia, consisting mostly of skin and adipose (fatty) tissue. They form the major externally visible portions of the vulva. In humans, there are two pairs of labia: the labia majora (or the outer labia) are larger and fattier, while the labia minora are folds of skin between the outer labia. The labia surround and protect the clitoris and the openings of the vagina and the urethra.

**Labiaplasty**
A plastic surgery procedure for altering the appearance of the labia minora and the labia majora.

**Laser-assisted vaginoplasty***
Treatment to ablate and coagulate vaginal tissue by using wavelengths having high water absorption, such as the CO$_2$ laser (10,600 nm). A wound response is initiated due to the heating and results in tissue remodeling with neocollagenesis and neoelastogenesis in atrophic skin.

**Menopause**
The time in most women’s lives when menstrual periods stop permanently, and the woman is no longer able to have children. Menopause typically occurs between 45 and 55 years of age. During menopause transition (perimenopause), hormone levels and menstrual cycle length begin to fluctuate. Symptoms that may appear during menopause and continue through postmenopause include: painful intercourse, vaginal dryness and loss of elasticity, and atrophic vaginitis (thinning of the membranes of the vulva, the vagina, the cervix, and also the outer urinary tract, along with considerable shrinking and loss in elasticity of all of the outer and inner genital areas).

**Neocollagenesis**
Creation and inducement of new collagen within the skin. Partially denatured (destroyed) collagen heals faster than completely denatured collagen. During the healing process, new collagen is formed, resulting in improved laxity.

**Neoelastogenesis**
Creation and inducement of new elastin within connective tissue, similar to the process of neocollagenesis.

**Pulse**
The brief span of time for which, the focused and scanned laser beam interacts with a given point on the tissue (in seconds, milliseconds, nanoseconds).

**Selective photothermolysis**
A concept used to localize thermal injury to a specific target based on its absorption characteristics, the wavelength of light used, the duration of the pulse, and the amount of energy delivered.

**Stress urinary incontinence (SUI)**
Unintentional loss of urine that occurs when physical movement or activity — such as coughing, sneezing, running or heavy lifting — puts pressure on the bladder.

**Vaginal mucosa**
The first layer of the vagina that is made up of a mucus membrane of non-keratinized stratified squamous (flattened) epithelium (epithelial cells) with an underlying lamina propria (thin layer of loose connective tissue). The vaginal mucosa is similar to the lining of the mouth. However, unlike the smooth surface of the mouth lining, the vaginal mucosa has many folds or wrinkles.

**Vaginal rejuvenation (also referred to as genital rejuvenation)*
Usually combines vaginoplasty (‘tightening’ of the vagina) and/or labiaplasty or vulvaplasty (reshaping of the vulva or labia, the outer and inner lips of the vagina). Laser resurfacing can also be used to modify the cosmetic appearance of the vulva (sagging skin, pigmentation, texture).

**Vaginal relaxation syndrome (VRS)**
An early form of vaginal prolapse in which vaginal tissue loses elasticity and tone.
**Vaginal vault**
The expanded region of the vaginal canal at the internal end of the vagina. The vaginal vault may prolapse after a hysterectomy, as there is no uterus supporting the interior end of the vagina.

**Vaginal vestibule**
Opening of the vagina where the vulva (area of the skin on the outside) meets with the vagina.

**Vulva**
The outer part of the female genitals. The vulva includes the opening of the vagina (sometimes called the vestibule), the labia majora (outer lips), the labia minora (inner lips), and the clitoris.

**Vulvar disease**
Can include inflammatory, ulcerative, and blistering disorders, as well as pigmentary changes and atrophy to the vulva.

**Vulvar dystrophy (sometimes referred to as dermatoses)**
Growth of abnormal skin on the vulva. The skin can be too thin, as with lichen sclerosus, or too thick, as with squamous hyperplasia. Sometimes there can be a mixture of both. Symptoms include: itching; burning; painful sexual intercourse; thickened or thin skin on the vulva, and stinging or irritation.

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