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MINOR VESTIBULAR GLANDS ANATOMY AND ITS ROLE

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Minor vestibular glands or Skene's glands, derived from the name of the American Gynaecologist, "Alexander J.C. Skene", also known by the various names such as - the minor vestibular, the paraurethral gland, the periurethral gland and female prostate glands (because prostate in males and skene function kind of similar). The Skene's glands play a role in lubrication of the vagina by releasing mucus during sexual activity also the secretion consist of antimicrobial actions which prevents urinary tract infections, a bacterial infection that affects parts of urinary system like bladder (acute cystitis), kidney, urethra. Minor vestibular glands play role in the phenomenon which we refer as "female ejaculation". Basically, female ejaculation is a small amount of fluid that may be released during orgasm. It composes of glucose, fructose and small amount of prostatic acid and specific antigens.

Minor vestibular glands are located within the distal walls of the female urethra. The weight of the minor vestibular gland is around 5.2 g in average whereas its size is 3.3cm×1.9cm×1cm (length×width×height). Ducts of the minor vestibular glands opens in vestibule of the vagina from both sides of external urethral orifice.

Skene glands are homologous to the prostate glands inside the males but are vestigial unlike the male gland. Remains of the periurethral gland were seen firstly in a foetus of size 50mm.

Common issues which can arise in skene's glands are cysts or certain kind of infections and rarely cancer. Skene's Glands cyst are generally small but the enlargement of these can cause complications such as pain during urination and sexual intercourse are the common symptoms. Excision of cyst surgically or Marsupialization are the treatments. The inflammation in these glands can cause Skenitis which can cause acute pain during urination, urethral-vaginal septa pain, unresponsiveness to antibiotics and certain supportive measures in Skenitis require surgical procedures. The elevation in the level of prostate specific antigen (PSA) can cause cancer not only in males but also in females. PSA is not specifically for prostate only but can be seen in various forms of female's tissues which includes breast, ovarian and endometrial tissue, though its concentration is low in female's fluid but it can be measured by immunoassays which are highly sensitive.

Despite of being a minor gland it plays a crucial and vital role in females, by protecting the female urinary tracts and bladder from various infections and providing anti-microbial properties.