

1

Anticipate Pain

The body anticipates pain; fear/anxiety may contribute.

2

Involuntary Reaction

The body automatically tightens vaginal muscles.

3

Painful Sex

Tightness makes sex painful; penetration may be impossible.

4

Pain Reinforces

Pain intensifies reflex response.

5

Bracing

Body reacts by "bracing" more on an on-going basis.

6

Avoidance

Avoidance of intimacy, lack of desire may develop.

The Cycle of Pain