


Female Sexuality Throughout the Lifespan


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DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

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Gain insight into issues in women's sexuality across the lifespan

Objectives


- Examine key components of sexual health for women across the lifespan.
- Identify barriers to sexual health in women at different ages
- Discuss the four most common sexual complaints in women
- Identify strategies to improve women's sexual health

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SEXUALLY ACTIVE LIFE EXPECTANCY

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Do any of these apply to you?

- Stress
- Unresolved issues
- Alcohol
- Too little sleep
- Parenting
- Medications
- Poor body image
- Obesity
- Erectile dysfunction
- Low testosterone
- Depression
- Menopause
- Too little intimacy


www.wabmd.com

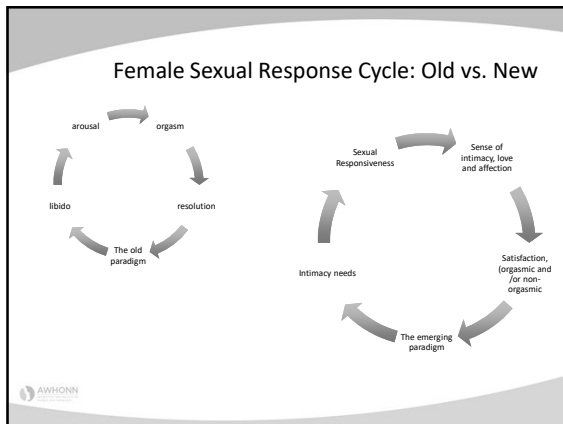
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THE FEMALE SEXUAL RESPONSE CYCLE

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- ### 10 Key Components to Sexual Satisfaction (Berman & Berman)
1. Sexual communication in and out of the bedroom
 2. Relationship health, emotional and physical connectedness
 3. Strong emotional health and social support
 4. Self-stimulation
 5. Addressing your past
 6. Orgasm
 7. Arousal
 8. Lubrication
 9. Accepting and overcoming physical obstacles
 10. Sexual empowerment

- ### The Facts About Sexual Dysfunction!
- ❖ Any decrease in desire, libido, sexual arousal, frequency of intercourse or delay/inability for orgasm
 - ❖ In US up to 40% of women and 30% of men report some form of SD
 - ❖ Low sexual desire in women and premature ejaculation in men being most common

- ### Childhood and Adolescence
- Infancy
 - Sexual response present from birth and in utero
 - Early childhood
 - Gender roles, touching, masturbation
 - Preadolescence
 - Great variance in sexual exploration
 - Adolescence
 - More intimate sexual activities

- ### Pregnancy and Childbearing
- Physiology
 - Hormonal changes affect sexual responses/experiences
 - Behavior
 - Impact on intimacy
 - Breastfeeding
 - Hormonal changes
 - Associated with less frequent intercourse
 - Infertility
 - Reproductive preoccupation, pressure, disappointment

- ### The 40's: the change begins
- Continuing with career/family responsibilities
 - Children have growing independence but often hectic schedules
 - Importance of scheduling time with partner – nurture your relationship
 - Many women may find themselves single parents

Menopausal Transition (MT)

Women describe midlife as a time of many transitions:

- getting older
- changing bodies, outlooks and relationships
- Personal achievements and employment are central (Woods & Mitchell, 1997).

Women themselves define MT as:

- the cessation of periods
- the end of reproductive ability
- a time of hormonal changes
 - change of life
 - changing body and emotions
 - The aging process.

****Very few women define the MT as a time of symptom or disease risk (Woods & Mitchell, 1999).**

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Symptoms of Menopausal Transition

- depressed mood
- hot flashes
- decreased sexual desire
- vaginal dryness
- forgetfulness
- difficulty concentrating
- awakening during the night or early morning awakening

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The 50's

- The sandwich decade
 - launching children, caring for elderly parents
- Moving into menopause
 - hot flashes, night sweats, mood swings, vaginal dryness and atrophy of tissues, possible weight gain
- Hormone Replacement
- Medical issues with self or partner resulting in ED

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The 60's & Beyond

- Women may find themselves single again
 - after the loss of a spouse
 - caring for a dependent spouse with physical limitations
- Continued vaginal dryness
- Genital atrophy

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Most Common Sexual Issues/Barriers

- Decreased desire/lack of interest
- Inability to arouse
- Inability to reach orgasm
- Pain during sex/lubrication difficulties

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Decreased Desire/lack of interest

- Components
 - Physical
 - Emotional
 - Relationship issues
- Medications
 - Antidepressants and SSRI's (Prozac, Zoloft)

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Inability to arouse

- Insufficient vaginal lubrication
- Anxiety
- Inadequate stimulation
- Blood flow problems affecting the vagina and clitoris

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Inability to reach orgasm

- Woman's sexual inhibition
- Inexperience
- Lack of knowledge
- Medication
- Chronic disease
- Insufficient stimulation
- Psychological factors
 - Guilt
 - Anxiety
 - Past sexual trauma or abuse.

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Pain during Sex

- Endometriosis
- Pelvic mass
- Ovarian cysts
- Poor lubrication
- Vaginitis
- Scar tissue from surgery
- STI
- Vaginismus
- Fear that penetration will be painful
- Sexual phobia
- Previous traumatic or painful experience

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Treatments and Interventions

- Education
- Enhance stimulation
- Distraction
- Noncoital behaviors
- Minimize pain during intercourse

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Education

- Human anatomy
- Sexual function
- Normal changes associated with aging
- Sexual behaviors
- Sexual responses

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Enhance Stimulation

- Erotic materials
- Masturbation
- Changes to sexual routines.

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Distraction

- Erotic or non-erotic fantasies
- Exercises with intercourse
- Music, videos, or television
- Books

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Minimize pain

- Using sexual positions that allow the woman to control the depth of penetration
- Vaginal lubricants
- Moisturizers
- Warm bath

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Vaginal Rejuvenation The “designer vagina”

A “vaginal rejuvenation” is a non-reconstructive vaginoplasty that restores the muscle tone and the aesthetics of the vagina, by removing excess tissues and tightening the supportive structures of the vulvovaginal complex, in effort either to reduce or to reverse the effects of aging and childbearing.

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ACOG Advises Against Cosmetic Vaginal Procedures Due to Lack of Safety and Efficacy Data

“ACOG recommends that women considering cosmetic vaginal procedures should be informed about the lack of data supporting the effectiveness of these procedures as well as their potential complications, including infection, altered sensation, dyspareunia (pain), adhesions, and scarring.”

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), in Committee Opinion No. 378: Vaginal “Rejuvenation” and Cosmetic Vaginal Procedures (2007) Reaffirmed 2017

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6 Sex Missteps Women Make

1. Not initiating sex
2. Worrying about how you look
3. Assuming sex for men is casual
4. Believing the man is always “up for it”
5. Not giving guidance during sex
6. Getting upset when he suggests something new

<https://www.webmd.com/women/guide/sexual-dysfunction-women#1>

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Sexuality Assessment Questions

- How has your sexuality changed as you have grown older?
- Does this change concern you?
- Have you tried to do anything about it?
- What would you like to do about it?
- Have these changes made a difference in your primary or intimate relationship?
- How has your partners health affected your sex life?
 - Has he/she expressed concerns about this
- What difference has this made in the way you think about yourself?
 - How about how you feel about your body?

Metz (2011)

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10 Surprising Health Benefits of Sex

1. Sex relieves stress
2. Sex boosts immunity
3. Sex burns calories
4. Sex improves heart health
5. Sex boosts self-esteem
6. Sex improves intimacy
7. Sex reduces pain
8. Sex reduces prostate cancer risk
9. Sex strengthens pelvic floor muscles
10. Sex helps you sleep better

www.webmd.com/sexual-health


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What can I do?

- Take charge of your sexual health
- Reach out to others and remain socially connected as you age
- Find a healthcare provider with whom you trust and can discuss intimate issues
- Ask how medications will impact your sexual health
- Move beyond destructive relationships in your life
- Be creative!

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