

### A regular sex life is not only sexually satisfying, but great for your health, too!

Did you know some of the benefits of regular sex may include:<sup>5</sup>

- ☞ More regular menstrual cycles
- ☞ More fertile menstrual cycles
- ☞ Lighter periods
- ☞ Better moods
- ☞ Better memory
- ☞ Better bladder control
- ☞ Fewer colds/flu
- ☞ Pain relief
- ☞ Stress relief
- ☞ Increased testosterone and estrogen
- ☞ Better weight control

### Did You Know...

Vibrators were first invented as a medical device sold only to doctors to treat women who complained of symptoms like fatigue, irritability, bloating, anxiety, headaches, erotic thoughts and vaginal secretions; they were thought to be suffering from "hysteria." Doctors would treat "hysteria" by rubbing the clitoris with oil until the woman reached "hysterical paroxysm," which we know now as orgasm. Since this process took a while, vibrators were invented to improve the technique, and eventually became so popular that they were sold directly to women.<sup>6</sup>

### At-a-Glance

- ☞ Four in ten women experience sexual difficulties throughout their lives.<sup>1</sup>
- ☞ Feeling loved and desired and physically and mentally ready are important components that contribute to a majority of women's sexual happiness and satisfaction.<sup>2</sup>

### Female Sexuality

Female sexuality is elusive, complex and often misunderstood. There has been considerable debate surrounding the nature of female sexuality and arousal. Despite sexuality becoming a more mainstream topic, in an international survey, almost 90% of women had never discussed sexual dissatisfaction with their health care professionals.<sup>3</sup>

### The Female Sexual Response Cycle

William Masters and Virginia Johnson conducted extensive studies on human sexuality in the 1960s and established that human sexual response occurs in a four-phase cycle:

- 1 Excitement (arousal)
- 2 Plateau
- 3 Orgasm
- 4 Resolution

More recently, Rosemary Basson constructed a non-linear model of female sexual response that integrates the significance of emotional intimacy, sexual stimuli and relationship satisfaction. This model emphasizes the complex nature of female sexuality and the impact of psychosocial factors on female sexual function.<sup>4</sup>

### The Female Orgasm

Current science indicates that women are one of the few female species that can experience an orgasm. Alfred Kinsey conducted research that found that about 90 percent of women are able to experience orgasm through some method of stimulation at some point in their lives. Orgasms are not only pleasurable, but they also release the "feel-good" hormones, oxytocin and endorphins.<sup>3</sup>

### Sexual Arousal BC

- ☞ Circa 320 BC in Greece, a plant called satyrion was used to stimulate arousal. The plant was so popular it is now extinct.<sup>7</sup>
- ☞ Circa 40 BC, Cleopatra dissolved pearls into vinegar and drank it as an arousal "potion."<sup>7</sup>

### Did You Know...

Sex improves the sense of smell by boosting the production of the hormone, prolactin.<sup>5</sup>

### Sexual Satisfaction

Due to the complex nature of female sexuality, sexual desire, arousal and satisfaction can be impacted by several factors.

First, it is important for each woman to understand how she achieves and defines sexual satisfaction, and to communicate with her partner. For example, many women require foreplay and clitoral stimulation to climax and cannot reach orgasm through intercourse alone.<sup>8</sup>

### Sexual Dissatisfaction

Lack of desire or interest in sex is the most common sexual concern women experience. This can be caused by a host of biological and psychological factors including:

- ☞ Daily life stresses
- ☞ Certain medications such as birth control or antidepressants
- ☞ Menopause
- ☞ Cancer or chronic illness such as diabetes<sup>9</sup>

Despite the millions of women that will experience a sexual problem, research indicates that only one-third to one-half of women who report feeling decreased desire or sexual response believe they have a problem or feel distressed enough to seek help.<sup>10</sup> Many women never have had a conversation with even their closest friend about their problems of sexual satisfaction.

If you are having issues with desire, arousal or satisfaction, it is important to speak with your doctor. There are a number of ways to treat sexual dissatisfaction. For some, your doctor may recommend an arousal oil, like Zestra, which is available online or in select drugstores.

### The top female erogenous zones include<sup>10</sup>

- ☞ Neck
- ☞ Back
- ☞ Ears
- ☞ Lips
- ☞ Breasts
- ☞ Stomach
- ☞ Nipples
- ☞ Buttocks
- ☞ Thighs

*What are yours?*



### Did You Know...

- ☞ According to the Kinsey and Hite reports, 1–2% of women can orgasm from fantasy without genital stimulation.<sup>11</sup>
- ☞ Smoking decreases blood flow to the vagina, making it dry and sex uncomfortable.<sup>6</sup>

### Resources

1. National Institute of Health: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/print/female-sexual-dysfunction/DS00701/METHOD=print&DSECTION=all>
2. DeKadt Market Research, February 11, 2009
3. HealthyWomen.org, <http://www.healthywomen.org/Documents/LetsTalkAboutSex.pdf>
4. Association of Reproductive Health Professionals: <http://www.arhp.org/uploadDocs/FSRfactsheet.pdf>
5. Sex on the Brain by Daniel G. Amen
6. What Your Mother Never Told You About Sex by Hilda Hutcherson
7. "Women's Sexual Desire: Disordered or Misunderstood?" by Rosemary Basson
8. New Harvard Guide to Women's Health by Karen J. Carlson, Stephanie A. Eisenstat, Terra Ziporyn
9. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists: <http://www.medem.com/medlib/article/ZZZ7P2WBT7C>
10. The New York Times' "A Dip in the Sex Drive, Tied to Menopause" by Jane Brody
11. 1 <3 Female Orgasm by Dorian Solot and Marshall Miller