

Quick Guide

Part 1 – What sex is all about, why we want it and what orgasm is

There is no 'normal' definitive framework for how we 'should' have sex.

It's important to work out why we're having sex – once reproduction is over, it's all about pleasure.

What do I want out of sex? What does my body want out of sex? It's important to take a step back and re-evaluate this, particularly in midlife and beyond.

There is a huge world of erotic pleasure to be had that doesn't have to involve penetration.

We can get very set ideas about what an orgasm is. Tantra and other schools of sexual thought expand the concept of what an orgasm can be and feel like.

It's important to slow down and explore.

When we are open to the idea that it's all about pleasure and we slow down and explore how our bodies work now, while noticing what's happening, then there are all sorts of new possibilities open to us.

Just because we may have a different experience of sex now doesn't mean it is worse – it's just different.

If we put achieving orgasm to one side and focus on pleasure, and we're aware of what's happening in our bodies, then something magical can happen and we become really open to more and more pleasure. From that place we are more likely to have all sorts of orgasmic experiences.

We may have automatic pleasure routes that have become habits and that's OK too. But be open to building new habits.

Quick Guide

Part 2 - Why it's good to practise self-pleasure

Taking time to self-pleasure helps with our own well-being and tuning into ourselves – potentially as important as time at the gym, diet and time with friends etc. It reconnects us with what is pleasurable for us and increases blood flow to the genitals, both helping our couple experience of sex.

Preparing for a self-pleasure practice

- Schedule a time when you can be private
- Turn the phone off
- Set a timer!
- Make the space lovely
- Choose some music – use it to let go of stress before getting into the practice
- Watch yourself
- Touch everywhere
- Relax!
- Take time to explore and notice what you're feeling
- Take orgasm off the agenda
- Slow your breathing down and connect with the parts of the body you're touching
- Give love and pleasure to your own body

We have primary, secondary and tertiary erogenous zones – explore everywhere.

Be aware of what you notice when touching yourself everywhere.

The more we're aware and have the capacity to notice how we feel, the greater the possibility to experience pleasure.

Quick Guide

Part 3 - How sex with our partners may change as we both age

Talk about why each of you wants to have sex - bringing everything back to pleasure and joy is crucial.

Be aware of different arousal patterns. These are one of the biggest issues for many couples who have problems with their sexual relationship.

Self-pleasure will help us reconnect with our own arousal patterns.

Traditional sexual patterns of arousal are also changing especially for younger people.

Biggest concerns for heterosexual couples – dryness for women and maintenance of erection for men.

Consider that maybe men are changing too and any issues are not our fault or his.

Massaging the man's erotic areas can be very pleasurable for him.

Self-pleasure for both partners increases blood flow to the genitals and supports our sexual response.

Explore toys for both of you.

Stay curious and explore!

When you both just can't be bothered:

- Take the focus back to pleasure
- Get a timer and set it
- You each have half an hour of pleasure from the other
- Maybe you just want a massage or to be stroked in a particular way
- Take pleasure from giving
- If it doesn't turn into sex that doesn't matter