

SaferSex4Seniors

Information you need to enjoy safer sexual pleasure

How to Talk to Your Partner about Sexual Challenges

Q. I'm embarrassed to tell my partner how I like to be touched.

Everyone needs to have their sexual desires validated. And everyone wants to please their partner. The only way to do this is to let your partner know what you like and don't like about your sex life. Try having a conversation outside of the bedroom about what each of you likes and dislikes. Take turns telling each other one thing that the other doesn't already know about what each of you likes.

Q. I'm afraid to speak up about my sexual desires.

Everyone's sex drive is different and is comprised of many things. Your partner is entitled to know about your sexual drive and desires. It's important that each of you share what level of sexual activity you want so you can try to meet each other's needs. Intimacy, affection, sensuality, sexual activities, and communication are all part of sexual desire and may be very different for each of you.

Q. I enjoy sex play that might be called kinky but I'm afraid my partner will be shocked.

Everyone has sexual desires and fantasies. Often, we are afraid to tell a partner about these because we think that what we want to explore is too unusual for a partner to understand. Try sharing that you'd like to spice up your sex life and try some new things. If your partner likes the idea, try out some new activities that you've had in mind. Next time, invite your partner to suggest something different. Anything that is mutually consensual is OK, especially if it increases pleasure for both of you.

Q. My partner has trouble getting an erection, and I'm beginning to think he is no longer interested in me.

As males age, changes take place in the body that have nothing to do with desire or how a man feels about his partner. Changes in erection firmness, lasting power, and ejaculatory force are common. Chronic problems may be diagnosed as erectile dysfunction (ED) and are also common in older men. Talk about these issues outside the bedroom and together, seek medical assessment. There are many remedies today for erection changes and ED. A therapist can help individuals and partners explore the emotional and relationship effects of physical changes and aging.

Q. I can't recall the last time I had sex, but I don't miss it. Is that normal?

It's not uncommon for people to put sex on the back burner at some point in later life, and it is perfectly reasonable to choose to abstain from sex. Are you getting the emotional intimacy that can make life more enjoyable? If not from a sexual partner, are you supported by friends or loved ones? If not, consider getting involved in social activities, adult classes, or volunteer activities to increase human contact.

Author bio: Constance Bowes, PhD, is a sex therapist and counselor specializing in relationships, intimacy, and issues around aging and sexuality. She works with men and women, and with couples, to explore, discuss, and resolve sensitive issues and concerns that may affect their sexuality and overall well being. <http://www.drconniebowes.com> Copyright 2012©by Constance Bowes