

# SaferSex4Seniors

Information you need to enjoy safer sexual pleasure

## How a Sexuality Educator Can Help You

### **Q. When and why might I want to visit a sexuality educator?**

Sexuality educators provide information that helps clients enjoy the most satisfying and life-affirming sexual life possible. Every consultation is unique, but typically the educator will ask questions in order to assess your concerns and determine appropriate solutions. You will be provided options, which may include specific suggestions that might make sex more comfortable or enjoyable; recommendations for videos, products, sexual aids; ideas for improving communication with a partner; or help re-thinking possibly negative attitudes are your body, its functioning or aging; and more. Your concerns and needs will dictate the content and structure of your educational consultation.

### **Q. Is private sexuality education the same as sex therapy?**

While therapists provide some education in the course of their work with clients, their focus is on the assessment and treatment of psychological issues, many of which can take months or years to address. Sexuality educators specialize in helping clients find practical solutions that can be put to use immediately. Follow-up visits can be helpful if you want help assessing your progress toward your goals, or if you have multiple concerns. But generally, sex education is short-term and solution-focused. An ethical educator will promptly refer you to a therapist or healthcare provider if the educator believes your concerns require more than an educational approach.

### **Q. Can a sexuality educator teach me sexual techniques?**

To a certain extent, yes. Educators can discuss techniques, positions, toys and lubricants, and they may suggest helpful books, websites, and videos. However, Certified Sexuality Educators never touch clients, and all consultations involve conversation and resource sharing only; there is no nudity on the part of the client or educator.

### **Q. How do I find a sexuality educator, and how do I know if the person is qualified?**

Independent sexuality educators with a high level of expertise can be located through a directory posted on <http://www.AASECT.org>, the online home of the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists. To be in the online directory, educators must exemplify the highest professional standards of professional expertise and ethical behavior. Only after many years of work and a rigorous assessment process are educators granted the designation of AASECT-Certified Sexuality Educator, or CSE. You may also find sexuality educators working at Planned Parenthood facilities, at HIV/AIDS clinics and other kinds of sexual healthcare organizations.

### **Q. What does sexuality education cost?**

Fees vary among educators and also according to the educational setting, i.e., a private consult for one or two people differs from group workshop or program. Private sex education is not currently covered by insurance plans, but your educator may offer a discount for follow-up visits or phone consultation.

**Author bio: Melanie Davis, PhD, CSE**, consults with individuals and couples to help them build sexual knowledge, comfort, and pleasure through the New Jersey Center for Sexual Wellness. <http://www.njsexualwellness.com> She provides phone consultations for mobility impaired clients and for those who live outside New Jersey. Through Honest Exchange LLC, <http://www.honestexchange.com> she helps doctors and educators learn about and talk about sexuality. She is an AASECT-Certified Sexuality Educator. Copyright ©2012 Honest Exchange LLC