

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT SEX AND MENOPAUSE



Menopause and perimenopause can affect a woman's sexual function. Evidence suggests that 68-86% of women experience sexual function changes or problems during menopause. These concerns may be very distressing for some women, and less bothersome for others. Luckily, there are safe and effective treatments available to help women maintain sexual function through the menopause transition.

Women of all ages value their sexuality, and regard this topic as appropriate for discussion with a physician. Still, doctors tend to avoid this topic unless the patient brings it up. Good communication is key to treating your concerns about sexual function.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor about sex and menopause.

1. **How might perimenopause and menopause affect my sexual function?**
2. **Will menopause affect my interest in sex? What can I do to improve or restore my libido?**
3. **How might my sexual function and body change during and after menopause?**
4. **Could I try using estrogen to make sex more comfortable? What are the risks and benefits of using hormone replacement therapy?**
5. **How can I practice safe sex during and after menopause? Am I still at risk for sexually transmitted infections?**
6. **Is there anything I can do to alleviate pain with intercourse that started since menopause?**
7. **What are vaginal dilators? Would they be helpful for me during menopause?**
8. **Is it ok to masturbate during and after menopause? Is it safe for me to use a vibrator?**
9. **How can physical therapy or sex therapy help me address menopause-related sexual function concerns?**
10. **What changes in sexual function do men experience with age?**

For more information about female sexual function in the context of cancer, visit www.womanlab.org, and connect:



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Important professional organizations recommend that doctors talk to women with cancer about sexual function:

National Comprehensive Cancer Network (www.nccn.org)

National Cancer Institute (www.cancer.gov)

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
(www.acog.org)

Society of Gynecologic Oncology (www.sgo.org)

Scientific Network for Female Sexual Health and Cancer
(www.cancersexnetwork.org)