

Sexual Health at Any Age

No matter your age, sex can be a healthy part of your physical and mental health. However, we know that as our bodies change — so can our attitude about sex. Learning how to enhance your sex life might seem intimidating, but we've come up with a few ideas to help you get started. Let's dive into it:

Talk with your doctor

According to the American Sexual Health Association¹, many doctors don't talk about sex — unless you bring it up. Whether they lack the training or feel hesitant about starting the conversation, you need to find a provider you feel comfortable talking to.

For example, erectile dysfunction can be a sign of an underlying medical condition². If you don't bring this up with your doctor, you could be ignoring a medical issue that needs attention. In addition, many medications can impact sexual function. For instance, medications to treat high blood pressure or depression can lower your desire to have sex³.

WebMD⁴ suggests asking direct questions to your doctor, such as: Can you recommend a sex counselor? Do any of my medications cause issues with sex? Would it help me to take estrogen? Is there an alternative to ED (Erectile Dysfunction) drugs?

Enjoy the benefits of sex

Let's take a moment to review the benefits of sex. According to WebMD⁵, sex can:

- Keep you and your partner close
- Boost your immune system
- Burn calories

- Lower blood pressure
- Help you relax
- Ease pain
- Keep your mind sharp
- May lessen the risk of heart attack and prostate cancer

A note on safety

New data published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention⁶ shows that gonorrhea, syphilis and congenital syphilis are rising. Even though STIs (sexually transmitted infections) are more common in younger people, anyone who is sexually active can still get an STI. In fact, nearly half of the people living with HIV in the United States are age 50 and older, cites the National Institute on Aging⁷.

Here's how you can protect yourself, notes the American Sexual Health Association⁸:

- Set boundaries with your partner about how to make sex safe.
- Make sure you and your partner get tested before having sex.
- Use a condom and lubricant each time you have sex.

4 ways to stimulate your sex life

The American Sexual Health Association⁹ shares advice on how to have a pleasurable, satisfying sex life.

Start the conversation: Your needs and desires change throughout your life. That's why it's important to tell your partner what feels good — and what doesn't.

Explore outercourse: If maintaining an erection is a problem, think about the intimate ways you can connect with your partner — intimate touch, manual stimulation, mutual masturbation or erotic massage.

Remember the lubricant: Because vaginal dryness is common after menopause, lubricants help make penetrative sex easier and more pleasurable.

Switch up your positions: If you're experiencing knee or back pain, you might need to change your sexual positions. For example, a wedge pillow can raise your hips and put less pressure on your lower back. Standing up might feel more comfortable, too.

Re-charging your sexual health is within your reach. What are you waiting for? The night is young!

Sources

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8. "Sex as We Age"
9. "Sex as We Age"