

How to Maintain a Senior Healthy Sex Life

Zia Sherrell | April 13, 2023


In this article...

- Learn more about senior sex, including the benefits and challenges that older people may face and some helpful tips for enjoying better sex as you age.

Being close to someone else is a healthy human desire that never goes away. Nearly **two in three** (<https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2018/older-sex-sexual-health-survey.html>) older adults say they're interested in sex, while two in five say they're sexually active.

Most people in their 70s say **sex is also more physically and emotionally satisfying** (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/02/09/sex-seniors-still-active/1905317/>) than in their younger years.

Getting older can make sex more challenging, but with some adjustments, you can have a healthy sex life no matter your age.



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Benefits of Senior Sex

Sexually-active seniors often have better health and quality of life than their abstinent peers.

Some of the **benefits of having sex as a senior** (<https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2014/sex-after-50.html>) include:

- **More liberating sex:** Seniors are often empty nesters.
- **Longer-lasting sex:** Many senior men have more control over their orgasms.
- **Less stress:** There is no need to worry about unwanted pregnancies.
- **Improved relationships:** Sex helps build intimacy with a partner.
- **Happier and calmer mood:** Sex releases endorphins which reduce feelings of anxiety and depression.
- **Better quality sleep:** Sex triggers oxytocin release, a hormone that helps you feel drowsy.
- **Less pain:** The increase in endorphins helps ease arthritis, headache and other pain.
- **Improved appearance:** Sex increases blood flow and circulation, bringing oxygen to the skin, giving a healthy glow.

Regular sex may also reduce the risk of prostate cancer, Alzheimer's disease and dementia, while boosting immunity.

Common Sex Challenges for Older People

Sex is good for seniors. However, it can be more challenging because of mobility issues and chemical changes.

Some of the common sex challenges seniors face include:

- Difficulty achieving or maintaining erections (impotence)
- Difficulty orgasming or orgasming too quickly
- Longer recovery time between sex sessions
- Reduced female lubrication
- Painful sex on penetration or in some positions
- Reduced sex drive
- Shame or embarrassment due to sex challenges

Tips to Make Sex Better As You Age

Despite the challenges, sex is a rewarding activity. These tips can help you overcome any difficulties you may face and enjoy the great sex you deserve:

Redefine What Sex Means for You

When people think of sex, they often think of vaginal or anal penetration. However, sex can take many forms, including oral or manual stimulation.

If penetrative sex is difficult for you, consider other sexual activities to feel closer to your partner. Kissing and nonsexual touch can also be rewarding for you both and build intimacy.

Redefining what sex means for you and integrating other forms of sexual expression into your sex life can make it much richer.

Focus on Foreplay

Foreplay can help overcome many of the sexual challenges seniors face. Extended foreplay can help someone with a lower libido than their partner feel more sexually inclined. It can also give men time to achieve an erection and help sustain it.

For women, a long foreplay session can improve lubrication. Spend time kissing and caressing your partner to get them in the mood before you attempt sex.

Use Condoms Outside Monogamous Relationships

While seniors don't need to worry about pregnancy, sex can still transmit sexually transmitted infections (STIs). In fact, **STI rates in the senior population** (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7177870/>) have more than doubled in the last decade, so it's important to protect yourself.

Use a condom (<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/sexuality-later-life>) in any new relationship. If you decide to see someone exclusively, you and your partner should be tested for STIs before you stop using protection.

Use Plenty of Lubricant

Commercial lubricants can supplement the body's natural fluids and make sex much more enjoyable and less painful.

You can choose from a wide range of lubricants from grocery stores, drug stores and sex shops, including flavored varieties and ones that warm the genitals. Make sure you use a silicone- or water-based lubricant with condoms, as these won't erode the latex.

Lubricant condoms are another option to further enhance your sexual experiences. You may need to experiment to find a lubricant you and your partner like.

Accept Your Partner and Their Limitations

Many seniors feel ashamed or guilty because they think they can no longer please their partners as they once did.

These negative feelings can make some sexual problems like impotence and low libido worse. Communicating openly with your partner and letting them know you support them can make you closer and improve your sex life.

Tell Your Doctor About Any Sex Challenges

Many sex challenges are simply a symptom of advancing age, but they can sometimes signify a more serious health issue. For example, heart conditions, diabetes and neurological disorders can all cause impotence.

It's a good idea to chat to your doctor about any concerns so they can rule out any underlying conditions. They can also refer you to a sex therapist who can help you work through your problems.

Keep The Joy Of Sex In Your Life

Sex is one of life's great joys, so there's no need to give it up as the years pass. With some modifications and the right attitude, it's possible to have a healthy and fulfilling sex life at any age.



About the Author

Zia Sherrell is a digital health journalist with over a decade of healthcare experience, a bachelor's degree in science from the University of Leeds and a master's degree in public health from the University of Manchester. Her work has appeared in Netdoctor, Medical News Today, Healthline, Business Insider, Cosmopolitan, Yahoo, Harper's Bazaar, Men's Health and more.

When she's not typing madly, Zia enjoys traveling and chasing after her dogs.

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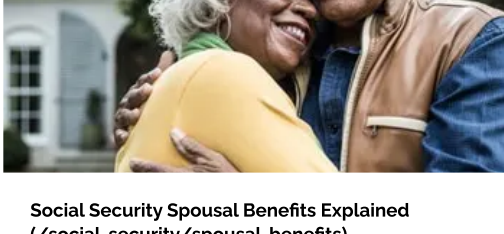
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