

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SEX LIFE

by

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Sex is one of those subjects that many people find difficult to talk about.

Negative attitudes towards sex are often passed on in families. In addition, if you read a number of publications aimed at improving your sex life you can be forgiven for feeling inadequate because you either want less or more sex than seems to be labelled normal.

The good news is that whatever you and your partner feel comfortable with is normal. Some people have high libidos wanting sex almost daily while others are more than happy with sex once a week. Sex does not only mean penetrative sex but covers a whole variety of sexual activities that may or may not involve penetration. If you think of sex as only being about penetration then you and your partner loose out on many sensually satisfying experiences. After all you don't always want a three-course meal, sometimes you want a snack or a complete change of cuisine.

The following practical tips are aimed at helping you develop and maintain a healthy and happy sex life.

Make sure your relationship is healthy

Sex is a useful thermostat as to whether a relationship is healthy. When people feel emotionally bonded and satisfied with their partner on an emotional level sex flows freely. However, when there are unsaid emotional frustrations you may start to find your desire and enjoyment of sex begins to change. If you want a good sex life you need to ensure neither you or your partner have any unsaid niggles – get into the habit of talking to each other about what you want, what you feel and the little things that trouble you and you are well on the way to maintaining your libido. In addition, sexual experimentation means trusting another person enough to share your fantasies and you are less likely to do this if you have negative emotions hidden away.

Tell your partner how much you love them and never assume the person knows. Many men suffer from this particular problem and it is important you help educate your man if he falls into this category. If he realises his sex life will get even better if he learns to express himself you may find this proves a real incentive in getting him to say what he feels.

Learn to Like Yourself

If you don't like yourself you are less likely to let yourself go in the sexual arena. Some women worry that they are too fat, too thin, that they have saggy breasts or are in some way unattractive. If you think this way you are likely to shy away from sexual contact and your partner may feel pushed away.

Remember that your partner has chosen to be with you. If you look at your man objectively is he really this fantastic six-pack muscle bound perfect specimen? If you can love and desire him the way he is why can't he feel the same about you?

Think about all the things your partner likes about you and realise that you are good enough just as you are. If you find that you cannot do this you may need professional help and can get this by contacting RELATE on 0845 456 1310 as they run special sex therapy clinics across the country.

Keep Dating and be close

Look for new ways to fall in love again. Remember how it used to be when you first met and the fun of learning about your partner? Try out new places and new activities together. Set one night aside each week where you go out on a "date" just like you used to. Keeping playful helps maintain a healthy relationship as does being affectionate so smile, hug and kiss in public. I don't

mean you have to eat face in the middle of a platform but romantic pecks and hugs ensure intimacy.

Get a new Wardrobe

Feeling sexy is all about confidence so buy yourself some sexy underwear – don't buy it for your partner buy it for you. If you buy clothes that make you feel great you are more likely to carry that attitude and confidence into the bedroom with you.

Talking is good for you

Get talking and discuss what you like, don't like and would like to try. You can only increase your sexual repertoire if you let your partner know about your desires. Most men love it when a woman expresses her sexual pleasures and lets him know what feels good – it makes them feel as if they are excellent lovers and this, in turn, makes them more eager to please. Some of you may have been brought up to think that it is embarrassing to talk about sex.

However, the more you can learn to do this the happier your partner and your relationship will be. Start by expressing to your partner words like “*that's nice*” or “*I like that*” when he does something you enjoy as you see the positive

way in which he responds this should help you become more courageous in expressing yourself.

Be Creative

Place sexy notes in your partner's diary, send saucy text messages or emails.

However, make sure you send them to the right person! A suggestive telephone call can be a winner too. Pin a sexy message to the door or a love note scribbled on the mirror or somewhere around the house your partner would least expect it.

Check your diet

Many prescription drugs and most anti-depressants reduce sex drive. Foods such as berries, cherries and tomatoes are likely to have a positive physical effect on your sex drive. Women need testosterone too to improve sexual desire so eating zinc-rich foods with vitamin B6 in can be a helpful. Such foods include shellfish, eggs, sesame, brown rice, turkey, bananas, chickpeas and avocados.

Variety really is the spice of life

Try out new places and new times for sex - a relaxed bath together, a quickie in the kitchen or going for a drive to a secluded spot can all add much needed variety to a predictable sex life.

If you want further help read *Love Coach – you have never been taught how to make love till now* by Susan Quilliam, Thorsons, £6.99 or *Ultimate Sex* by Anne Hooper. Dorling Kindersley, £9.99.

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