

Experiencing Sexual Pleasure



Sexuality is an important aspect of life. Irrespective of age, gender, or sexual orientation, pain changes the perception of our body and our sexual capacity, which can negatively influence self-esteem. It is therefore important to discuss these changes with your partner and with your physician who may refer you to a health care provider who is trained in sexology. How has persistent pain impacted your sexuality?

- Prefer not to talk about it
- Pain has not impacted my sexuality
- Fear of having sex
- Changes in my sexual capacity
- Loss of desire
- Change in body image and esteem
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Communication issues with my partner
- Relationship issues with my partner

Sexuality is not limited to intercourse; other forms of sexuality can be explored as a couple or by self that can be just as satisfying. Persistent pain may even be an opportunity to explore other sexual avenues while respecting your limits, pace and comfort.

The loss of intimacy directly related to persistent pain can place stress on relationships. Safe and healthy sexuality with a partner is based on respect, good communication and consent; this includes open and clear conversations regarding your limits and mutual desires. There are several good articles on this topic.

On a scale of 0-10, how important is experiencing safe and healthy sexuality to you?

Why did you not give it a lower number? What makes it important to you?

- Reduce my nervous system hypersensitivity
- Improve my sleep and physical well-being
- Increase self-confidence and relationship with self
- Experience pleasure, self-realization & well-being
- Experience intimacy and closeness with partner (if applicable)
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I can do the following to address and enhance my current sexual health and well-being

- Discuss sexuality with my physician or a therapist trained in sexuality or sexology
- Write down and reflect on my attitude towards sexuality and the types of activities that I would like to explore while respecting my limits and those of my partner
- Openly discuss with my partner my emotions, desires, limits, and our needs
- Visit <https://www.mayoclinic.org/> and search for “Chronic pain and sexuality”
- Plan a date with myself or my partner to explore new sexual health avenues; while respecting my pain level and comfort
- Remove any sexual performance pressure on myself and my partner

What can you do today to get started?