



RESTORING INTIMACY

Making the Connection between Mood Disorders, Sex, and Intimacy

GUIDED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR WOMEN

Many people experiencing depression notice a decrease in sexual desire and may have fewer thoughts about any type of sexual activity. At times this decrease in desire is part of the depression, and when the depression begins to lift, the sexual feelings return. At other times, decreased sexual desire develops as a result of tension or dissatisfaction in a couple's relationship. Sexual problems associated with stress or relationship issues will often improve if the partners make an effort to improve the overall quality of their relationship.

Sometimes, however, the sexual problems may be related to antidepressant medication prescribed to treat the depression. The following questions are designed to help determine if the medication may be causing the sexual problems.

If a change in sexual functioning occurs within a few weeks of starting a new antidepressant, the next step would be to speak with your healthcare professional, who would then work with you to resolve the problem. Because depression is a serious medical illness, it is important not to suddenly stop taking the prescribed medication without first consulting your physician.

If you and your partner are getting along well and do not think the decrease in sexual interest is due to a relationship problem, then the following questions may help determine if the sexual problem is related to the medication being taken. Talk with your doctor if you answer "yes" to any of the following questions. Please note that the sexual behaviors listed here fall within the range of normal sexual activity for adults; however, not all types of sexual activities are universally practiced or appealing to every person.

1. Have you noticed a change in sexual activities or functions (for example sexual urge, drive, or ability to reach orgasm)? If you noticed a change, did it begin
 - Before you became depressed?
 - Around the same time you became aware of your depression?
 - A few weeks after you started taking your medication for depression?

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Sexual Desire/Sex Drive

2. Independent of your partner's sexual needs, has there been a change in your sexual desire/sex drive or urge to engage in any type of sexual activity?
3. Has there been a change in frequency of intercourse?
4. Has there been a change in how often you initiate sexual activity?
5. Has there been a change in frequency of sexual thoughts or fantasies?
6. Has there been a change in the frequency of masturbation?

Arousal

7. Has there been a change in your ability to get sexually aroused or excited? Does this occur under all situations with your partner and in masturbation? Has there been a change in lubrication (wetness) during sexual activity?
8. Has there been a change in your use of over-the counter vaginal lubricants?
9. Are you experiencing pain during sexual activity?

Orgasm

10. Has there been a change in how long it takes you to climax or reach orgasm?
11. Has there been a change in your ability to experience orgasm?

Additional Information

12. Could these changes be related to
 - Relationship problems (arguments, a change in feelings toward your partner)?
 - A change in your personal situation (illness in partner/family member, financial problems, stress, etc.)?