

# MINI GUIDE



# TIPS AND INSIGHTS TO IMPROVE YOUR SEX LIFE

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## ***PART ONE***

### ***Solving the Five Relationship Problems That Ruin Sex Lives***

Every sex life waxes and wanes, but a dry spell of months or years warrants some serious consideration. While problems with physical intimacy are sometimes caused by physical problems, many couples come up against tricky psychological issues that undermine intimacy. Read on to learn how you can work to solve the five major emotional problems that ruin sex lives.

#### ***1) Low self-esteem***

A lack of self-esteem can cause reticence to engage in sexual activity or a reserved approach to physical intimacy that misleadingly suggests a lack of enthusiasm. After all, it's hard to let yourself go and enjoy being playful if you're constantly worried that your partner is negatively evaluating your body or your sexual performance. If this sounds like a familiar picture, make sure you confide in your partner about your feelings so as to make it clear that the relationship itself is not in trouble. Sometimes just talking about this can help to increase comfort levels between the two of you, and you can start thinking about ways to actively boost your self-confidence. Whether you choose to arrange therapy to discuss the roots of your insecurities or simply feel you need to hit the gym for a few months, being proactive is the key to solving this cause of sexual problems.

#### ***2) Dealing with a new member of the family***

While newborn babies are utterly delightful in many ways, these beautiful little people can be real mood-killers sometimes. For one thing, it's hard to find the time to woo your significant other when you're spending your days feeding, changing and soothing a brand new baby. In addition, most new parents are utterly exhausted by the round-the-clock care that their new family member requires, making it hard to find the energy to become excited by the prospect of sex. The best course of

action is to make sure that you have some time off from being parents. Leave your baby with a trusted relative or friend, and take an afternoon or an evening to enjoy some uninterrupted intimacy (in all senses of the word).

### ***3) Predictable routines***

Once you know what works, it is extremely tempting to stick to a sexual script instead of straying from your comfort zone. After all, it feels safe, comfortable and easy. However, a repetitive and unsurprising sex life can deaden desire and make your partner seem sexually uninspiring. If you suspect that predictability is the root of your sexual issues, it's time to talk to your partner about new things you would like to try. Instead of saying that you are bored, simply explain that you would like to start having more sex and experimenting with some fun ideas. You can give each other permission to suggest absolutely anything without ridicule, and find new positions, sex toys and scenarios that excite you both. Although it might be intimidating at first, making changes gets easier with practice and can really start to reinvigorate your sexual dynamic.

### ***4) Anger or apathy***

There are two major relationship problems that tend to have a profoundly negative influence on a couple's sex life. Firstly, if you have become indifferent to one another and there is not any sense of closeness between you, it's highly likely that you will end up drifting away from sexual intimacy as well. Secondly, if your home is like a war zone and you find yourselves in constant conflict, you may have no desire to let down your defenses in a way that is conducive to enjoyable sexual contact. These types of problems need to be addressed if you are going to have a chance of getting your sex life back on track, so it's time to take a deep breath and talk to your partner about what can be done to improve the relationship. Relationship counseling can be a helpful avenue to pursue when you want to foster better communication, and your feelings about sex can be aired in confidence as well.

### ***5) Depression***

Finally, if one partner has untreated depression then it can dramatically reduce libido, undermine self-worth and make previously exciting activities (such as sex) seem bland or meaningless. If it seems as though one of you is struggling with depression to a significant degree, make an appointment to discuss your situation with your family doctor. Although antidepressants can cause sexual problems as well, it's important to note that not everyone experiences these issues (especially at low doses). In addition, you may find that seeing a therapist is sufficient to help

you work your way out of a period of depression and that you are not suffering from a severe chemical imbalance that requires drug treatment.

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## ***PART TWO***

### ***Seven Tips for Dealing With Incompatible Sex Drives***

Although sex is not the most important part of a long term relationship, partners with different sex drives can find that this incompatibility starts to interfere with other aspects of their relationship. If your partner seems to be less interested in sex, you can feel unattractive, insecure and frustrated. Meanwhile, if your partner wants to have more frequent sex, you can feel pressured and resentful. Read on to discover seven tips that will help you to understand and deal with the difference between your partner's sex drive and your own.

#### ***1) Have a long, honest conversation:***

If you refuse to talk about your sex life, any problems can be magnified and can start to infect unexpected parts of your interpersonal dynamic. After a while, the whole relationship may turn sour. Given these possibilities, avoiding the issue is one of the worst decisions you can make if you and your partner have incompatible sex drives. That being said, many people find it awkward and uncomfortable to have frank conversations about sex, so if you decide to be the one to instigate the conversation then make sure you do so in a way that encourages your partner to open up. Start out by saying that you are not blaming anyone for the issues in your sex life, and that you want to discuss them so that you can work together to find a solution that will make things better. If the conversation starts to become an argument, try to keep calm and remind your partner that you only want to discuss this topic because you care about making sure that the relationship is as good as it can possibly be.

#### ***2) Find out whether foreplay is an issue:***

People sometimes start to desire sex less because they are not deriving as much enjoyment from the act. In some cases, this is because one partner needs

considerably more foreplay in order to feel like they are in the mood for sex. If you are the person with the higher sex drive, ask your partner if they think they would enjoy physical intimacy more if you spent more time kissing or touching before sex. Meanwhile, if you have realized that you would want to have sex more often if your partner tried harder to ‘warm you up’, then say so. This information does not have to be presented in the form of a criticism. For example, you might simply choose to say that you love the way your partner touches you and that you think you would find sex even hotter if more of this foreplay was involved.

### ***3) Consider different forms of sexual intimacy:***

Incompatible sex drives occasionally result from physical difficulties or discomfort. For example, men who struggle with erection problems may have lower sex drives due to nervousness and anxiety associated with sex. Meanwhile, women who have regularly experienced pain during sex may start to shy away from the act in case it hurts them. If you and your partner think that your sex life is being undermined by these types of physical issues, give some thought to expanding your sex life. For example, you might start focusing on manual or oral stimulation instead of intercourse.

### ***4) Never have sex if you do not truly want to:***

If your sex drive is lower than your partner’s, their unhappiness and your own feelings of guilt may make you feel as though you should just ‘get on with it’ even if you do not feel like doing so. While this may temporarily please the other person, it tends to have negative consequences in the long term. You may feel used or disconnected from your partner, and if they realize that you are having sex when you do not want to then they may feel offended and embarrassed. This type of well-meaning deception can cause trust issues that run deeper and last longer than the problems in your sex life.

### ***5) Never pressure your partner to have sex:***

If you have a higher sex drive than your partner, it is vital that you never make them feel as though they are under pressure to have sex with you. While you should always be honest if a lack of sex is making you unhappy, you need to draw a distinction between being truthful about your feelings and trying to manipulate your partner into being physically intimate so that you feel better. Your partner is under no obligation to do anything that they do not want to do, and trying to pressure someone into having sex is a form of psychological abuse that violates the person’s autonomy.

***6) Think about trying new things:***

If you used to have compatible sex drives and there are no obvious physical or emotional issues that could be causing a reduction in one of your sex drives, boredom may be the root cause. Although it is often easiest to continue repeating a tried and tested sexual routine, over time the repetition can lead to one or both parties feeling somewhat numb to what used to be a satisfying source of stimulation. When prompted to reflect, the member of the relationship with the lower sex drive may realize and admit that they would be more interested in sex if there was more variety on offer. You can then discuss new positions, purchases and ideas that might make intimacy more exciting (and make your sex drives more compatible).

***7) Explore counseling:***

Finally, sex therapists and certain relationship counselors are trained to help couples explore the reasons underlying their sexual difficulties, so it is worth considering this option if discussions between you and your partner have not managed to improve your sex life. Although it sounds daunting to discuss something so personal with a stranger, remember that counselors and therapists are required to abstain from judgmental behavior or remarks and that they will have seen many other couples with problems that are more unusual than yours.

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## ***PART THREE***

### ***Boost Your Sex Life With These Ten Remarkable Foods***

Whether you're looking to spark a waning sex drive or increase your body's response to physical pleasure, there are foods out there that can help reach your goal. For example, some ingredients can increase endorphin levels while others can help to balance your hormones. Read on to discover ten of the most exciting and useful ways to influence your sex life by changing your diet.

#### ***1) Vanilla***

Vanilla has a rather boring reputation, but the vanilla bean is actually a nerve stimulant. As a result, vanilla consumption may sensitize your skin and increase the pleasure you feel when your partner touches you. This handy benefit can make foreplay much more exciting and lead to more passionate sex.

#### ***2) Asparagus***

Since asparagus is well known for changing the scent of your urine, it might not be your first thought when you consider sexy foods. However, the aphrodisiac qualities of this delicious vegetable have been documented since as early as the 17th century. Recent research suggests that asparagus stimulates the libido by making you have more folate at your disposal. In addition, asparagus increases histamine production, and histamine is necessary for orgasm.

#### ***3) Pomegranate juice***

Pomegranate juices spikes testosterone levels, increasing them by up to 30% in some studies. This male sex hormone can enhance the sex drive of both men and women, leading to a greater interest in more frequent sex. Further, some research suggests that pomegranate juice improves circulation, which can improve male sexual performance and enhance physical sensations.



#### **4) Honey**

This natural sweetener provides you with a hefty dose of boron, a chemical that helps to make sure that male and female sex hormones remain in the right balance. As a bonus, honey can offer you a quick improvement in energy levels, potentially increasing your enthusiasm for lovemaking.

#### **5) Red wine**

Since alcohol can reduce physical sensations and inhibit sexual function, it's important to go easy on the wine if you're planning to get intimate with your partner. However, a little red wine can actually help to improve your sex life. In particular, red wine contains resveratrol, an antioxidant that increases the blood flow to your nether regions.

#### **6) Chilies**

Hot chilies instigate endorphin production, leading to greater levels of energy, excitement and happiness. While you can also enjoy these consequences by hitting the gym, sharing a spicy pasta dish with your partner can be a much more enjoyable precursor to sex. Chilies also create physical responses similar to those evoked by sexual stimulation, such as sweating and a faster heart rate. As a result, seeing your partner eat hot food might subconsciously kick-start feelings of arousal.

#### **7) Chocolate**

Chocolate is a classic sensual food, as lovers often enjoy feeding it to each other or consuming chocolate coated strawberries. More interestingly, however, it contains phenethylamine (PEA) that enhances your response to pleasurable sensations and may even make you feel more physically attracted to your partner. It's also worth noting that the tryptophan in chocolate appears to help people feel more mellow and optimistic.

#### **8) Bananas**

Bananas have an undeniably phallic appearance that might immediately encourage sexual thoughts. However, they also contain minerals and enzymes that have been shown to boost male sex drive, so it's important to eat them after looking at them!

#### **9) Oysters**

Another famous aphrodisiac, oysters do have certain properties that seem to improve sexual function. For one thing, it has a high amino acid content that stimulates sex hormone increase. In addition, sperm production may be improved by the zinc found in oysters.

### ***10) Coffee***

Finally, recent research on caffeine suggests that a cup or two of coffee can help to improve things in the bedroom. It seems that caffeine increases blood flow and heart rate in a way that enhances sexual response in women in particular, but further studies may reveal similar results for men.

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