

7 Ways To Get More Sex

Dissatisfaction with the amount of sex in their relationship is a common problem that comes up in marriages and other long term intimate relationships. It is a commonly seen problem in couple's therapy, probably because when there are problems in the relationship, amount of sex tends to decline. However, it's important to point out lack of sex does not always mean there are other problems in the relationship. Couples who are quite happy with each other and all other aspects of their relationship can also struggle with this problem.

This dissatisfaction impacts the rest of the marriage or relationship. It always takes a toll in some sense. In couples who are happy with the rest of their relationship, it can still diminish their level of closeness, and they might become moody or slightly depressed. In couples who it is one of many problems, it can make the relationship seem very unsatisfactory and hopeless. When sex is good in a relationship, we like and tolerate each other a bit more because that sexual happiness spills over into the relationship. Likewise without it we can be less satisfied and more easily annoyed by our partners.

There is no magic number that can tell couples how often they should be having sex in order to be "normal." Instead, people should discuss their needs openly with their partners and negotiate a relationship that meets *both* of their needs. It is important these discussions take place when both people are in a good mood and you have some quiet time to talk. Talk openly with your partner about your needs and ask and really listen to theirs.

Before we cover 7 Ways To Get More Sex, let's look at the statistics, so people realize how common it is to either have a sexless marriage or a low-sex marriage. Here is what the latest research says about how often Americans are — and aren't — having sex.

Overall married couples are doing well:

* Married couples say they have sex an average of 68.5 times a year. That's slightly more than once a week. — *Newsweek*

* Married people have 6.9 more sexual encounters per year than people who have never been married. — *Newsweek*

But there are problems too:

* 15 to 20 percent of couples have sex no more than 10 times a year, which experts define as a sexless marriage. — *Newsweek*

* 20 to 30 percent of men and 30 to 50 percent of women say they have little or no sex drive. — *USA Today*

* 25 percent of all Americans (a third of women and a fifth of men) suffer from a condition known as hypoactive sexual desire (HSD), which is defined as a persistent or recurring deficiency or absence of sexual fantasies or thoughts, or a lack of interest in sex or being sexual. — *Psychology Today*

These statistics tell us while overall couples tend to have regular sex, there are definitely slumps that occur and can last quite a while. And so below is some very direct, practical advice to get more sex.

Before we start the countdown, I want to give an extra #8 to getting more sex... write down the seven items we go over AND DO THEM. This may seem obvious, but the #1 place people fail in changing a behavior is in consistent follow-through. People get motivated, gather info, make a plan, and then don't follow through. Or try one thing, it fails, so they give up. I suggest trying everything we list. Take a scientific approach – trial and error, see what works for you.

1. Take the lead by communicating your own desires and by finding out exactly what your partner likes, then initiate sex by doing what your partner likes. So basically do what turns your partner on. Because if you want more sex, the number one thing you need is a willing partner!

In our minds we often approach sex as a series of visions of what we would like to happen that would feel pleasurable to our own body, yet the best way to get there is to arouse the other person so they are engaged and doing those things to your body.

Related to this, I often see people let their gender-based opinions get in the way here. For example, over and over I have heard men say, "She shouldn't need flowers to want to have sex, or need a clean house... she's just trying to avoid sex." Or women say, "Sex is so perfunctory for him. It's all about the act, like, he wants more oral sex; it's not about being close to me."

You have to ask yourself what you want... to have more sex, or to have a discussion or argument about the differences between men and women? If you want more sex, then buy the flowers, or clean the house, or give more oral sex... the list is endless, and the point is to summarize #1: Take the lead: Find out what turns your partner on and do it, and let your partner know what you like as well.

2. In #1 we focused on being the initiator, so #2 is the opposite: When your partner approaches you for sex, stop what you are doing and say yes.

Responses that delay such as: I just want to finish this show, or I need to finish reading this, or I'm in the middle of a computer game I want to finish, or the kids might not be asleep yet, or just let me finish loading the dishwasher... these can result in the moment getting lost. You should stop what you are doing and attend to your partner. Whatever you were doing can wait.

If you are tired or not in the mood, go with it anyway. You have a partner approaching you for sex, and you want to have more sex, so go with it. The warm up/foreplay period might take a little longer because your mind wasn't there, but that's OK. Take a deep breath, relax, and shift your focus to sex. So #2 is adopting a "Just say YES" approach.

3. Be willing to compromise and incorporate into sex some of the things your partner really likes even if you don't particularly enjoy that. The comedian Paul Riser said, "If you freeze frame sex at any given moment, one person is thinking, Oh this is so great, this feels so good, and the other person is thinking, when is it my turn." Now obviously he is overstating the point for comedic effect and there are many parts of sex that both people enjoy equally, but there are differences

in what people find sexually pleasurable as well. If your partner has learned that you are never going to do those things that can diminish his or her interest in sex.

Some common examples that couples often bring up are oral sex, and extended length or lessened length of foreplay. If you don't like performing oral sex but your partner likes receiving it, think about under what conditions it has been not as bad for you; people who dislike performing oral sex often say in the shower or just after a shower is more acceptable, and there are also scented oils and such that can help. With foreplay women often want more and men may want less. As a man, approach sex willing to lengthen foreplay; again, if your goal is more sex, and adding 10-15 minutes into foreplay gets you your goal, then it's worth it. For women, engage in the occasional quickie; have lubrication available to make this possible.

The point here is not to compromise so much that sex is not enjoyable to you, and no one should do something that they find hurtful or offensive. The point is just like all areas of marriage, some compromise can make the relationship better.

4. Schedule sex dates. In our busy lives, between work and for some people work + kids, time for sex can take a back seat. Sex is supposed to happen after work is done, the kids are taken care of, time with the kids, family time, taking care of the house... the list goes on. The things that tend to get done in our lives are the things we schedule. Don't worry that you won't be in the mood. It can be a weekly scheduled 'sensual time' that doesn't have to have absolute pressure to have sex, though the goal would be that happens often during this time. Spend the time relaxing, with music, engage in massage, keep conversation light, take a bath together, etc. Once you disengage from all of the outside distractions, relax, and focus on one another in a place that also lends itself specifically to sex, it will often happen.

And don't worry about the kids so much around this. For example, your 9-year-old can get up Saturday morning and pour his or her own cereal and play or watch cartoons and understand that Saturday morning is mommy and daddy's special couple time. Likewise your teenagers can understand that Friday night is your alone time and not to bug you unless it is an emergency. Your teens may be smart enough to figure out you are probably having sex in your room, and sometimes parents worry about that. If they ask what you are doing simply say, "Spending quiet alone time together as a couple. That is important for a healthy relationship." You don't need to mention sex of course! Also many teens are self-absorbed and won't give much thought to what you are doing. And if they do, there is nothing wrong with them seeing the role model of two adults with kids who are still in love, still having sex, and making time for themselves.

Like all items recurring on a schedule, it can work best if it is a standing item and the day and time are not renegotiated every week. Also, this is not the same as a date night; date night might end in sex or include sex but also is often more about time together without the kids such as going out on a date; this sex date or sensual date is specifically about sexual closeness.

5. Set the stage, to include the big picture in the relationship, sexiness, and the moment. There are many components of setting the stage. In the big picture, this involves creating a sensual environment between you and your partner. Complement one another. Engage in sexual talk. If in the middle of your busy day you have a sexual thought about your partner, send an email or text sharing that

thought. Hold hands, hug and kiss as a regular part of your day. Do romantic things for your partner, such as leaving a love note where they can find it, or planning a romantic date. Romance doesn't have to be expensive; one flower with a note that says, "I still love you as much as the day I married you," is just as effective as a bunch of flowers, and a written love note as good as a card.

Setting the stage also means making yourself sexy for your partner and for yourself; I say also for yourself too because we tend to be more interested in sex when we feel attractive and sexy ourselves. Also help make your partner sexy to you. If you like the way she or he looks in a certain kind of briefs, buy them and tell your partner she/he looks great in them. That sort of thing. Be sure under this to look at the short term as in how you can feel sexy this week, and not just the long term. For example, many people answer this by saying they'd feel sexier if they lost weight; with 60% of our population overweight that is a common thought. Well, that's a great goal and losing weight can increase your energy and self-esteem about the way you look. However, it will take a few months usually. So definitely work on the long term goals such as that, but also think about how you can feel sexy this week. For women that is often related to clothes, lingerie, and make-up. Also think about when during the day you feel sexiest: what are you wearing, what time of day is it, etc. If you are a man who feels most sexy in the morning just after your shower, then initiate sex then.

Also notice when your partner is most sexy to you. Same sort of thing, is there a time of day or way they dress, etc., that makes them more sexy to you? Initiate sex then, when your partner is most attractive to you.

Fantasies can also help set the stage. It's not that you can play out a fantasy every time, but the talk itself is arousing and sensual. Then pick some fantasies or components you can play out for one another. Doing this occasionally can add spice to the sexual routine.

Last as far as setting the stage in the moment, make sure you are free of distractions, take the time to do whatever you need to do to feel sexy (which could be a quick shower or brush your teeth or put on lingerie), and put on music or light candles. It really only takes about 5 minutes to set the stage in the moment.

6. Be healthy. The most important thing in your life is your health, and I mean physical and mental health. Anyone who has been without their physical or mental health knows this, yet we tend to take it for granted day to day. Both physical and mental health have a direct relationship to sexual desire. Physical ailments and excess weight tend to sap energy and diminish sex drive. Being physically fit and well rested increases energy and sex drive. Regular exercise increases energy, feelings of well being, and sex drive. Common mental health ailments such as depression and anxiety diminish sex drive, as does poor work-life balance, too little sleep, and too little time for self and relaxation.

When physical or mental health problems begin to occur, address them immediately and get professional help early in the process. Your sex life suffers when you are not healthy, so pay attention to your physical and mental health.

7. Do what is needed to have a happy relationship. Unresolved conflicts, a sense of dissatisfaction, emotional needs not being met in the marriage, poor communication and misunderstandings, not spending much quality time together,

etc. diminish interest in sex. It is very hard to have a satisfying sex life when one or both people are harboring some frustrations about the relationship overall, or are not connected for some reason.

Make a happy relationship a priority. Spend fun time together. Have date nights. Take couple's trips together. Keep a balance between work and time for your relationship.

Some people with children say to me they never have time alone because they are always with their kids and they'd feel bad leaving them with sitters and such; but the most important thing you can give your kids along with safety is a happy marriage. A happy (divorce-proof) marriage is an amazing gift to give a child in a society where about half of all marriages end in divorce. And you need time alone as a couple to sustain that.

Get help if you cannot resolve problems. Couple's therapy can be very effective, and help partners learn to communicate better, compromise, understand their partner and their self better, and effectively resolve conflicts. Learning to effectively resolve problems is very important so a couple can move on after disagreements and not harbor resentments.

As related to sex which is our topic today, a couple's therapist who is also well versed in sex therapy can help a couple develop and sustain a satisfying sex life, and can often help move the process along by asking important questions that partners might be shy about bringing up on their own or not quite know how to approach with one another. A good couple's/sex therapist can also help a couple gain insight into what is interfering with their sex life being satisfactory and how to improve it. Therapy provides a safe environment to talk about any marital or couple's topic.

So last but certainly not least, if you want more sex, do what you need to do to create a happy marriage.

In summary, we have looked at seven ways to get more sex in your relationship. Some you may already do; if so, ask yourself if there is room for improvement in those areas. Some are fairly easy to incorporate immediately. Others require on-going efforts, so the goal would be just to start those, and then keep them incorporated into your daily life. Lastly, share this article with your partner if you want, but remember, only you control your life. If you want more sex, you should be prepared to take responsibility to do these seven things. Don't just give this to your partner and say, "Here's what you should be doing so we can have more sex." That hand off of responsibility is a turn off. And you are trying to focus on turn ons!

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