

FACTS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT SEX

Sex Facts Checklist

Directions: Discuss each of the following generalizations about male/female sexuality with your partner to find out if any are accurate to your relationship:

Sexual Drives, Desires, and Rejection

- Men need sex to feel connected.
 - Women need to feel connected (through talking, romance, or affection) to want sex.
- Men are usually aware of sexual urges prior to sexual contact.
 - Women often are not aware of feeling aroused until they are sexually stimulated.
- Tension and stress can trigger a man’s arousal system and aid performance.
 - Women need to relax and open up to enjoy sex. Stress and constantly caring for others can inhibit sexual responsiveness.
- Unusual ideas or waking a man up to have sex can excite him because of the above.
 - Pressuring a woman to try “unusual” activities or waking her up to have sex can kill her desire.
- Sexual rejection will feel doubly painful when a man is aroused. After too much rejection, a man may lose his sexual desires.
 - A woman needs to feel safe to say “No” to sex, or she may lose her desire to say “Yes.”
- When women initiate sex regularly, men can feel worse about themselves (due to performance pressure) and eventually lose all interest. A man needs clear messages that his partner loves sex with him (without feeling pressure to perform) to maintain interest.
 - Women may appreciate a man regularly initiating sex as long as he can read her “signals” when she is too exhausted or tense and be willing to settle for hugs and cuddles.
- Expressing confidence in a man’s sexual expertise can arouse him.
 - When a man appears confident in his sexual expertise, a woman may feel aroused.
- Sexual discussions can turn a man off if he isn’t in the mood.
 - Talking about a woman’s feelings without pressure to have sex can help her mood.

Arousals and Orgasms

- A man first needs direct stimulation of his penis to “wake up” other erogenous zones (testicles, perineum, or other areas.)
 - A woman may first need her least erogenous zones (feet, thighs, etc.) caressed for her to be comfortable having her breasts, nipples, or clitoris stimulated.
- Men need a direct approach for an orgasm, which can take five minutes or less.
 - Women need an indirect, teasing approach (moving toward and away from erogenous zones), which can take 20 minutes or more.
- Men are usually consistently capable of orgasms due to steady levels of testosterone.
 - Women are not always capable of having orgasms or enjoying certain types of touch due to constantly changing ratios of estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men may be more likely to have one routine sexual approach due to consistent hormonal levels. ◦ Women may need different types or amounts of stimulation because of varying hormone levels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men need orgasms to be satisfied because sexual pleasure comes from releasing tension. ◦ Women can be satisfied with closeness without having an orgasm because they enjoy the building of tension and like the intimacy that comes with penetration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men need occasional quickies to maintain sexual interest and have the patience to regularly focus on their partner's needs. ◦ Women need quickies for times when they are not capable of having orgasms or when they are too exhausted for longer lovemaking.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arousal enhances a man's visual appreciation of his partner's body. ◦ Insecurities about appearance unnecessarily inhibit a woman's sexual desires.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a woman responds with sexual sounds, men feel validated and aroused. ◦ When a man makes love verbally ("I love you . . ." "You're so . . .") women are often aroused because they feel a sense of connection and are reassured about their bodies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A man can be pushed out of control or turned off if a woman takes charge and tries too hard. A woman's sexual responses will arouse a man and help him last longer. ◦ A woman's orgasms will be inhibited either by pressuring her to or by not giving her opportunities to have a climax. If sex regularly lasts too long, passion can die for both sexes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After his orgasm a man's desire disappears. ◦ After her orgasm, a woman can enjoy penetration. It will not matter to her how long her partner's erection lasts if he gives her the opportunity to have an orgasm first.

These "facts" are adapted from *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* by John Gray (HarperCollins, 1992)