

Feed your desire for a healthier sex life.

Millions of Americans struggle with low sexual desire, erectile dysfunction, and/or difficulty with sexual responding. Healthy sexuality begins with what we chose to put into our bodies—by which I mean *nutritional* choices, of course! (We covered eco-friendly sex toys last month). There are a variety of foods, herbs, and supplements that increase sexual desire, increase energy, improve performance, and aid in having stronger, more pleasurable orgasms.

Food and Nutrition

Foods that contain Vitamin A, Vitamin E, B6, and Potassium are important for a healthy production of hormones, energy, and overall functioning. Vitamin A is essential for reproduction and the hormones associated with reproduction. For Vitamin A, great food choices are: eggs, fish, cheese, yogurt, leafy green veggies, and yellow fruit (for example, pineapple). Vitamin E is sometimes referred to as “the sex vitamin” as it aids the body in producing sex hormones (i.e.- estrogen, testosterone, etc.). In fact, some women have found a heightened sexual experience by using Vitamin E oil as a lubricant. ☺ Both B6 and Potassium are known to help increase sexual libido in both men and women. Yellow fin Tuna is a wonderful source of B6 and Bananas are a good choice for Potassium.

In M. Lindberg’s (2007) book, “The Orgasmic Diet,” she offers an easy to follow diet plan that promises to “lift your libido and bring you to orgasm” more easily. It is of note that the diet is geared toward women only. The food-oriented part of the diet regimen includes:

- A daily fish oil supplement.
- A daily multivitamin, which includes calcium, magnesium, Vitamin C, Iron, and Zinc.
- A nutritional balance of 40% carbs, 30% protein, and 30% fats in daily food intake. Carbs should consist of non-starchy vegetables and fruits. Healthy fats exclude trans fats and polyunsaturated fats.
- A half ounce of quality dark chocolate, every day. (I love this part!)

The regimen also consists of “regular exercise of sex muscles” and avoiding “orgasm killers” (we’ll talk more about these below). As with any new diet, it generally takes at least two weeks of consistency to experience noticeable changes. For the best results, be consistent, patient, and really commit to your new diet. Always check with your doctor before starting a new diet or taking any new vitamins or supplements, as they may interfere with a current medical condition or medications.

Libido “killers”

If you are already experiencing problems with sexual desire or functioning, you may want to consider reducing or eliminating anything that could be compounding the problem. Libido killers include: cigarettes, trans fats, sugary foods, some starchy foods, and excessive alcohol. In addition, xenoestrogens (found in pesticides and in bovine growth hormones) interfere with testosterone levels, which can negatively impact sexual libido in both men and women.

There are also many medications that cause problems with sexual functioning. As previously noted, ALWAYS discuss your medication regimen with your doctor and do not decrease or eliminate any medication without the support of your treating physician. That being said, medications that can cause problems include: antidepressants (SSRI’s, MAOI’s, and Tricyclics); hormonal birth control; anti-hypertensive medications (i.e.- blood pressure meds); and medications used to

treat Central Nervous System diseases. Speaking of the nervous system, stress and anxiety are also known to interfere with sexual desire and/or functioning. If you are experiencing increased stress or anxiety, consider incorporating relaxation techniques into your daily routine.

Finally, being overweight may result in high blood pressure, and /or clogged arteries thereby reducing the blood flow to vital sex organs. It may also lead to having low self-esteem, negative body image, or not feeling attractive—all of which may reduce or diminish sexual desire.

Natural solutions

In general, anything that is good for your cardiovascular health is good for your sexual health. Healthy sexual functioning requires proper blood circulation and a healthy production of hormones. There are several herbs and supplements that promote a healthy libido:

- **L-Arginine** is an amino acid that promotes blood flow, and helps with stamina. It can be found naturally in foods such as spinach, almonds, walnuts, salmon, cod and halibut. It can also be taken as a pill supplement or as a cream. Many women report that the cream, applied directly, had the best results for them in increasing clitoral sensation and orgasm intensity.
- **Maca**, also known as “Peruvian Ginseng” is known for improving sexual desire and enhancing orgasm in both men and women. It is also used for increasing energy and improving fertility.
- **Yohimbine** increases blood flow and is frequently used as a natural treatment for Erectile Dysfunction. Men can see noticeable effects within 30 minutes of taking it. It can also be obtained in prescription strength, with a prescription from your doctor, under the brand names Yohimex and Yocon.
- **Muirapuama** increases blood circulation, increases sexual desire in women, increases sex drive, and has historically been used in Brazil as an aphrodisiac.
- **Rhodiola Rosea** enhances sexual desire, increases energy, and may help prolong stamina in some men.
- **Horny Goat Weed** has been used to treat low sexual libido.
- **ECGC** is a potent catechin; which promotes blood flow and increases fat burn. It can be found in green tea.

Thankfully, you don’t have to run out and buy each of these individually! There are several supplements on the market that combine several of the aforementioned herbs into one pill. These include: Irwin Naturals “**Steel Libido**,” Applied Nutrition’s “**Libido-Max**,” and Physician’s Formula’s “**Passion Rx**,” just to name a few. ☺

Now go out there, have fun, and eat your way to a happier, healthier sex life!

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