

Exercises, therapy could help curb premature ejaculation

By ISADORA ALMAN • July 5, 2009

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Dear Isadora: I have been involved with the same woman for a number of years. The problem is premature ejaculation. I have never suffered with other women, only with her. She thinks it is because "I love her, but I do not like her." Because I do not want to disappoint her, nor embarrass myself, we do not have sex. Help!

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Answer: Any man can learn to last longer by repeatedly practicing a program of retraining exercises, which can be found online and in most sexual education manuals. At their most basic, they consist of stopping at a certain point in arousal, backing off until control is regained, and then starting sexual activity again.

If you have control on your own but not with her, I recommend you see a sex therapist to deal with the issues in your relationship that are causing it. Your partner may be right.

Dear Isadora: In an otherwise accurate response to a question in your column about the differences between a turn-on and a fetish, you described fetishes as a "psychological problem." A fetish is only a problem if you make it one.

Most partners are willing to oblige fetishes if presented as something interesting and fun, and not something terrible that you feel compelled to hide. If fewer people regarded fetishes and kinks as problems, there would be less infidelity and more sexually gratified people.

Answer: I agree -- both that a problem need not be a problem unless one makes it so and that a partner who is willing to indulge a fetish is one to be treasured. But you live a charmed life if you believe that "most partners are willing to oblige."

Fetishes that are complicated, such as requiring that sex take place in water or wearing certain costumes or that involve ritual acts can be off-putting to partners who want to engage in a broader range of activities.

Dear Isadora: You mention frequency of sex and libido for menopausal women. What about us 70-plus women? My libido has really diminished. I don't think men ever lose their libido.

Answer: Postmenopausal means every woman of any age who has finished having periods. When menstruation stops, hormones diminish. That includes testosterone, which governs sexual desire.

Men usually have far more testosterone than most women, so even though testosterone also declines as men age, the levels to which it drops are usually still higher than most women's.

ISADORA ALMAN, author of "Doing It: Real People Having Really Good Sex," is a board-certified sexologist and licensed psychotherapist. You may write to her at ialman@freepress.com

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