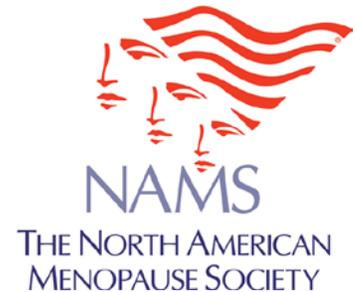


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New Study Shows Women’s Changing Attitudes About Sex as They Age

Importance of sex diminishes over time with less effect on overall relationship

CLEVELAND, Ohio (October 5, 2016)—Sometimes the sex just isn’t as good for women as they age—for a variety of reasons. Does that mean the relationship has to suffer? A new study coming out of University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center assessed the effect of sexual concerns on the quality of romantic relationships. Its results will be presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) in Orlando, October 5-8.

For some women, sexual function is seen as a key measure of their overall quality of life. So what happens when sexual function declines as a result of age? More than 500 women aged 40 to 75 years and older (who were currently in a partnered relationship) were asked that very question in a recent online survey. The questionnaire recorded various parameters, including sociodemographic information, sexual health concerns and their associated personal consequences, help-seeking motivation, and the effect of sexual concerns on relationship quality and sexual intimacy.

Diminished or no sexual interest and diminished or inadequate vaginal lubrication were the two most common sexual concerns identified across all age groups. Women in their 40s felt the most negative effects on the enjoyment of their partnered relationships from their sexual concern(s) compared with women in the older age groups. Most age groups agreed that sexual activity was important to their overall quality of life, except the women in their 70s. Among all respondents, however, sexual concerns only somewhat decreased their ability to enjoy their partnered relationship.

The survey found that 52% of respondents had not discussed their sexual concerns with their healthcare providers. Of those women who did have the discussion, 70% indicated that they had to initiate that discussion. Personal lubricants and vibrators were the most commonly reported products used to alleviate sexual concerns. For respondents aged 40 to 69 years, feeling better about their bodies was the most frequent response when asked what would increase satisfaction with their sex life.

“This survey sheds light on how women feel about the impact of sexual health concerns on their overall quality of life,” says Sheryl Kingsberg, PhD, Chief of the Division of Behavioral Medicine at University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center and lead author of the study. “Although the women in this study felt that their sexual satisfaction could improve, the majority remained happy with the quality of their

partnered relationships, demonstrating that sex may become less of a determinant of overall relationship satisfaction over time.”

“This study additionally confirms that better communications are needed between healthcare providers and their middle-aged women patients to address sexual function concerns,” says Dr. JoAnn Pinkerton, NAMS executive director.

The survey was sponsored by Nuelle, Inc./Fiera®.

Drs. Kingsberg and Pinkerton are available for interviews before the presentation at the Annual Meeting.

Founded in 1989, The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) is North America’s leading nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the health and quality of life of all women during midlife and beyond through an understanding of menopause and healthy aging. Its multidisciplinary membership of 2,000 leaders in the field—including clinical and basic science experts from medicine, nursing, sociology, psychology, nutrition, anthropology, epidemiology, pharmacy, and education—makes NAMS uniquely qualified to serve as the definitive resource for health professionals and the public for accurate, unbiased information about menopause and healthy aging. To learn more about NAMS, visit www.menopause.org.