

Why Menopause Reduces Your Sex Drive



There may be many reasons for a **diminished sex drive**, but in some cases, women between the ages of 40 and 60 often experience a lack of desire to be intimate with their partner as a direct result of perimenopause or menopause, also known as “the change.”

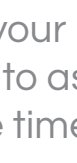
If you find that perimenopause or menopause is lowering your sex drive, there are remedial steps that you can take. It is, however, important that you pay attention to the problem before it affects your relationship, self-confidence, or quality of life.⁽¹⁾



The main hormones that affect your sex drive

When you are menopausal, your **estrogen and testosterone levels drop**, causing an array of changes in your body. Women experiencing perimenopause (the transition years before menopause) can also be affected in the same manner. These changes can include a lower sex drive. When you are going through the change, the drop in hormone levels can desensitize you to touch or sensual stimulation.

As your estrogen levels decrease, it can also limit blood flow to your vagina and affect lubrication, making intimacy painful. The combination of reduced sensitivity and lubrication is, ultimately, why your sex drive is lower than it was during the perimenopausal stage. Other contributing factors during menopause can be depression, anxiety, poor sleep, and bladder control problems.



Why these hormones decrease with menopause

As your ovaries get older, they release fewer hormones. This has an influence on two hormones called Luteinizing Hormone (LH) and Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH) that has the job of regulating your estrogen, testosterone, and progesterone. This causes a decline in your estrogen and testosterone levels.



How to curb the symptoms of a low sex drive

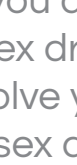
How you should go about **getting your sex drive going again** typically depends on the specific problem. If you are unresponsive to touch, stroking, or sexual thoughts, and your relationship with your partner is intact, you may want to ask your partner to spend some time and make an effort to boost your arousal. You can also consider consulting with your healthcare provider to find out if estrogen replacement therapy is a viable option.

If intimacy is painful due to insufficient vaginal blood flow and lubrication, try using water-soluble lubricants like Astroglide. Stay away from non-water-soluble lubricants as they can inhibit the contraceptive qualities of condoms. These types of lubricants can also be a breeding ground for bacteria.

There are other treatments available for vaginal dryness. Certain drugs can thicken your vaginal tissue and make it less fragile. Keep in mind, however, that these drugs can also thicken the lining of the uterus and lead to blood clots and strokes.

It is important to find the cause of your lowered sex drive. If you are depressed or anxious, seek professional treatment or use relaxation techniques. Sometimes, problems with your relationship can also be detrimental to your sex drive. Underlying or unresolved issues you have with your partner can manifest in physiological ways and be made worse by your drop in hormone levels. In cases like these, undergoing therapy can work wonders to restore your sex drive.

Certain medications can also diminish your sex drive. Ruling out every other potential cause may not be as easy. Chances are that if you took steps to combat dryness and poor sensitivity to sexual impulses, your sex drive will be restored. If not, start regulating your sleeping patterns, address potential stress and anxiety, and make an appointment with your doctor to find out if you have bladder problems or conditions similar to a urinary tract infection.

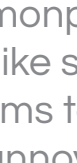


Don't worry, it will get better!

Naturally, you may be in dire straits to find a solution for your lowered sex drive as soon as possible. Intimacy is, after all, an integral part of your relationship. **Luckily, a lowered sex drive due to menopause is a temporary problem.** If you are struggling to find a solution to your low sex drive, all you have to do is relax and keep communication open with your partner. Tell them that your low sex drive is caused by a drop in your hormone levels and that it's not an indication of your feelings towards them.

If you no longer have to use contraceptives or if your children moved out of the house, make use of the newly found freedom to boost your sex drive.

Many times, this will alleviate anxiety and pressure that you feel when you have to be intimate. When menopausal or experiencing the change, a relaxed state of mind can do wonders for your sex drive. Simply by realizing that you are in control and that your low sex drive is a temporary problem will solve your problem and bring your sex drive back up to par.⁽²⁾

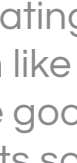


Here are some other things to consider

As stated earlier, during perimenopause, the years running up to menopause, you'll experience a huge number of emotional and physical changes.⁽³⁾

Since everyone has a slightly different journey along this section of life, it's a case of seeing how you'll be personally affected by your ovaries shutting up shop at the end of your reproductive cycle. Indeed, some women find being freed of any concerns about pregnancy helps them feel more enthusiastic about sex rather than less.

So, is it just hormones that can wreak havoc on your desire?⁽⁴⁾



Other Factors That Can Impact Sex Drive

Although the underpinning biological reason for a reduced sex drive is hormonal, there are also some other key areas sometimes responsible for changes in your libido.

These are generally related to the other commonplace menopause symptoms and, like so much during the change, it seems to be a domino effect with one annoying incident leading to another area of your life worsening.

Here are some of the other salient factors that influence your libido...

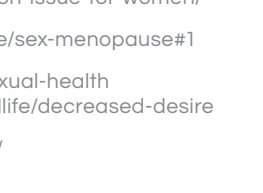
- Poor sleep leading to general fatigue and grumpiness
- Spiraling stress levels affecting your mood across the board
- Problems with bladder control leading to embarrassment
- The side-effects of any medication you're taking
- Anxiety and depression brought about by menopause
- Weight gain can occur making you feel awkward
- General unease that can come as a natural part of aging and feeling less desirable⁽⁵⁾

If you are experiencing libido loss during menopause, it's natural and not your fault. The fact that millions of other women are undergoing the same frustrating changes might not initially seem like much consolation but there's some good news...because this issue affects so many, there's no shortage of strategies you can use to restore that all-important passion factor.

Here are five ways you can improve your love life during the change so you can carry on as normally as possible even if you're bombarded by those infuriating hot flashes...

- 1 **Use a Lubricant:** Since vaginal dryness can make sex feel sharply painful, it makes sense to use a lubricant to give nature a helping hand. This is the first and most obvious way to push back against those pesky hormones.
- 2 **Focus on Foreplay:** Rather than rushing to the main event, take your time to restore intimacy with prolonged and passionate bouts of foreplay. If you're stuck for ideas, there's a wealth of resources online to help stimulate your imagination. Then your body will take over and do the rest when it's properly warmed up.
- 3 **Hormone Replacement Therapy:** HRT will restore the balance of estrogen which will directly help with any vaginal dryness. You shouldn't decide to undertake hormone therapy purely to deal with sex drive though and it's essential to be aware of the risks. Consult in detail with your doctor before opting for this approach to lessening menopause symptoms.⁽⁶⁾
- 4 **Ramp Up The Exercise:** Exercising has the combined advantages of helping you stave off weight gain while also improving your mood. Make sure you don't overdo it, though, and stay within your personal limits.
- 5 **More General Lifestyle Changes:** Whether it's getting more sleep or dealing with stress more effectively, if you isolate the root causes for your drop in sex drive, you can attack those areas head-on with some simple, natural lifestyle changes.

For more extensive information please see our interactive education program at www.vergowoman.com



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