

# bedroom blues got you down?

what you need to know about your partner's sexual dysfunction

Are you frustrated with the lack of physical intimacy in your relationship? Do you feel abandoned in your own bedroom? When you are together with your partner, do you feel alone? Are you experiencing sexual boredom? Has your sex life become dull and routine? Do you long for the passion that used to exist in your relationship? Has the loss of intimacy in your relationship left you feeling disappointed, dissatisfied, unhappy, unfulfilled, hurt, lonely, rejected or resentful? If the answer to these questions is yes then you are not alone. It is estimated that 15-20% of couples have a sexless marriage defined as 10 or less sexual encounters a year. Studies have shown that the average rate of sexual encounters for all married couples is 58 times a year or a little more than once per week. Of course this statistic is age-dependent with younger couples having a higher frequency of sexual encounters. Studies have also shown that 1/3 of all couples suffer from low sexual desire (loss of libido). In fact, the #1 complaint encountered in sex therapy practices is loss of desire now referred to as HSDD - Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder. HSDD is not gender specific and men as well as women suffer from loss of libido. The popular notion that "men just want sex and they can't get enough" is just a myth. About 10% of all men are impotent and as much as 50% of men over the age of 50 have some degree of erectile dysfunction and/or premature ejaculation. For these men, the "fear of failure" predominates and they tend to exhibit avoidant behavior and subsequent loss of libido. This fear of failure is commonly known as performance anxiety.

In general, men are hesitant to discuss issues related to sexual performance with their partner. Conditions such as Erectile Dysfunction, Premature Ejaculation, and Low Libido are common (over 30% of men) and while it may seem that your partner is not interested in you or your needs, he may be too embarrassed to talk about these problems. It is important to realize that the loss of intimacy or the "Bedroom Blues" may not be his lack of desire for you rather his loss of self-confidence and low self-esteem secondary to erectile dysfunction. These men tend to feel emasculated, devastated and alone. What you perceived as neglect may in fact be an easily treatable condition known as ED (erectile dysfunction).

In 85% of cases, ED is caused by a biological or physical problem such as Hypertension, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, Prostate problems, medication side-effects, alcohol abuse and possible Low Testosterone or Low-T as it is commonly referred to. Testosterone is a hormone that begins to decline in men after the age of 30, about 1% per year. As such, Low-T tends to be more prevalent in middle-aged or older men. Causes of Low-T may include: testicular injury, testicular cancer, systemic hormone imbalance, infection, chronic liver or kidney disease, medications, genetic conditions, Diabetes, and obesity. Psychogenic causes are responsible for 15% of cases; these include depression, stress, fatigue and performance anxiety.

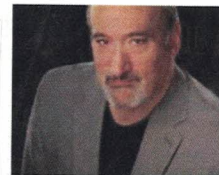
Premature Ejaculation (PE) is defined as ejaculation that occurs before or soon after penetra-



tion. In some cases, premature and/or delayed ejaculation is caused by past traumatic events or psychological factors such as guilt from a strict religious background. Certain drugs including anti-depressants may affect ejaculation as can nerve damage or spinal cord injury. Biological issues such as hormonal imbalances, abnormal levels of brain chemicals or "neurotransmitters", thyroid disease and inflammation of the prostate or urethra may lead to PE.

ED and PE are common causes for performance anxiety. It is this anxiety that can then lead to worsening ED and PE in a vicious cycle. Remember, a woman can fake an orgasm but a man can't fake an erection! Your partner maybe avoiding sex out of fear, shame and embarrassment. It is imperative that you show support and understanding of HIS problems that ultimately are the root cause of your lack of intimacy. Applying more pressure on him to perform will only lead to more failure and avoidance. Remain positive, upbeat, and non-judgmental. Realize that he may need your help

in overcoming these hurdles. Allow him to be the initiator or aggressor in the bedroom. When the time is right for him, the time will be right for you! The most important thing you can do is open a non-threatening dialogue with your partner about his problems and then seek out the advice of a medical professional and/or sex therapist. The good news is that Dr. Jeffrey M. Schwartz at the Center for Sexual Medicine PLLC in Lakeland, Florida is both a physician and sex therapist. Dr. Schwartz is a Diplomate of the American Board of Anti-Aging Medicine and a Florida Certified Sex Therapist. He can diagnose and effectively treat the hormonal and psychological components of male sexual dysfunction. With the proper diagnosis and treatment, your partner's sexual health and confidence will be restored and you will be on the path toward sexual fulfillment and true intimacy again!



Jeffrey M. Schwartz, M.D.

Integrative Gynecologist

**IGO** INNOVATIVE  
GYNECOLOGY &  
OBSTETRICS  
TRANSFORMING THE WAY WE CARE FOR WOMEN