

New measure of sexual arousal found for both men and women

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According to a new study published in the latest issue of *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* and conducted in the Department of Psychology of McGill University, thermography shows great promise as a diagnostic method of measuring sexual arousal. It is less intrusive than currently utilized methods, and is the only available test that requires no physical contact with participants.

Thermography is currently the only method that can be used to diagnose sexual health problems in both women and men. In fact, women and men demonstrated similar patterns of temperature change during sexual arousal with no significant differences between genders in the time needed to reach peak temperature.

"Using thermography, we also found that women's subjective experience of sexual arousal corresponded with their physiological genital response; this challenges the common notion that women don't know their bodies," says Tuuli Kukkonen, a Ph.D. candidate in psychology at McGill University and lead author of the study.

"I predict that the major physiological measure of sexual arousal for most future clinical trials of female sexual arousal disorder will be genital temperature as measured by thermography," according to Dr. Yitzchak Binik, senior author of the research and Professor of Psychology at McGill and Director of the Sex and Couple Therapy Service of the McGill University Health Center (www.sexandcoupletherapy.com).

"This is a huge breakthrough in the assessment of genital blood flow research in women's sexual health," observed Irwin Goldstein, Editor-in-Chief of *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*. "Previous testing was invasive and involved placement of measuring instruments in various locations in the genital region and this interfered with the arousal itself.

Thermography does not have any such requirements and is very user-friendly. This may be the first test to diagnose blood vessel blockage as a cause of sexual dysfunction in women, and may help identify those patients who may be helped by vasoactive drugs similar to those prescribed for men with erectile dysfunction from narrowed blood vessels."

Source: Blackwell Publishing

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