

63 percent of women report sexual problems with orgasm proving biggest issue in teens and 20s

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Almost two-thirds of females attending a general urology practice reported that they suffered from sexual dysfunction, according to a paper in the August issue of *BJUI*.

Dysfunction rose with age in all categories except [orgasm](#), with more than half of women aged from 18 to 30 reporting orgasm problems, significantly higher than women aged 31 to 54.

Researchers asked 587 women aged from 18 to 95, who attended a urology clinic in New Jersey, about six key areas of female [sexual dysfunction](#) (FSD): lack of desire, arousal issues, lack of lubrication, problems achieving orgasm, lack of satisfaction and pain during intercourse.

"We found that 63% of the women suffered from FSD and that there were significant links between FSD and age, menopausal status and use of selective [antidepressants](#)" says co-author Dr Debra Fromer, head of the Center for Bladder, Prostate and Pelvic Floor Health at Hackensack University Medical Center, New Jersey.

Twelve per cent of the women who took part in the study were aged 18-30, 27% were 31-45, 25% were 46-54, 24% were 55-70 and 12% were 70 plus. They attended a typical American metropolitan urology practice caring for conditions such as urinary incontinence, [urinary tract](#)

[infections](#), pelvic floor problems and [kidney stones](#).

Key findings of the survey included:

- The most sexually active age groups were 31-45 year-olds (87%), 18-30 year-olds (85%) and 46-54 year-olds (74%). It then fell sharply in 55-70 year-olds (45%) and in women who were over 70 (15%).
- The top overall problem was lack of desire (47%), followed by orgasm problems (45%), arousal issues (40%), lack of satisfaction (39%), lack of lubrication (37%) and pain (36%).
- Five of the six categories increased as the women got older: desire from 36 to 96%, arousal from 27 to 54%, lubrication from 26 to 45%, satisfaction from 28 to 88% and pain from 10 to 56%.
- The only category that bucked the trend was orgasm, with problems higher in the 18-30 age group (54%) than in the 31-45 (43%) and 46-54 (48%) age groups. It then rose to 66% at 55-70 and 87% when women were over 70.

The top three problems by age group were:

- 18-30: orgasm (54%), desire (36%) and satisfaction (28%)
- 31-45: desire (48%), orgasm (43%) and satisfaction (40%)
- 46-54: desire (65%), satisfaction (53%) and orgasm (48%)

- 55-70: desire (77%), orgasm (66%), satisfaction (65%)
- Over 70: desire (96%), satisfaction (88%) and orgasm (87%).

"FSD can have a major effect on women's quality of life" says Dr Fromer. "Self-esteem, sense of wholeness and relationships can be seriously and adversely affected, exacting a heavy emotional toll.

"Researchers have found significant associations between major categories of sexual dysfunction, reduced physical and emotional satisfaction and general well-being.

"That is why it is so important to ensure that problems are identified and tackled wherever possible. For example a number of hormone and other drug treatments have been shown to benefit [women](#) with FSD."

Known risk factors for FSD include age, a history of sexual abuse or sexually transmitted infections, depression, lower socioeconomic status, lifestyle, overall physical health and sexual experience.

"Interestingly, our study found very similar levels of dysfunction to an age-matched Turkish study" adds Dr Fromer. "This suggests a biological cause for FSD rather than societal or cultural factors, although they make some contribution to certain psychological aspects of the disorder."

More information: Female sexual dysfunction in urological patients: findings from a major metropolitan area in the USA. Elsamra et al. BJUI. 106, pp524-526. (August 2010). [DOI: 10.1111/j.1464-410X.2009.09091.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-410X.2009.09091.x)

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