

Sex life wanes for more than half of new mums

June 18 2015, by Rob Payne



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

If you're a new mother in Australia and aren't feeling it in the bedroom,

you're clearly not alone.

A study from Curtin University has found 64.3 per cent of new mums have suffered from sexual dysfunction in the first year after giving birth, a rate much higher than previous estimates of 26 per cent.

The most common problem was [sexual desire disorder](#), with more than 80 per cent of respondents saying they were simply not interested in initiating or responding to sexual advances for a prolonged period.

More than half of the 325 participants had orgasmic problems and/or issues with [sexual arousal](#).

The study involved a voluntary multidimensional online questionnaire assessing [sexual function](#), health, depression and relationships.

Lead author Dr Marjan Khajehei says the prevalence of sexual dysfunction and the silence surrounding the issue require action.

"This study found 90 per cent of women with [sexual problems](#) reported that they did not consult professionals about changes in their sexual functioning, perhaps because of shyness and embarrassment, as reported in previous research," Dr Khajehei says.

"Although women's sexual functioning is an important topic, it is not routinely discussed during antenatal and postnatal visits.

"Sexual satisfaction is important for maintaining quality of life for women, their families and society.

Mother and partner crucial in maintaining sexual functioning

"Health professionals and clinicians need to discuss these issues during prenatal care visits and efforts should be made to engage not only the woman but her partner as well, with referral for support during the first 12 months postpartum if necessary."

The disinterested women were much more likely to experience problems with their partners, with 45.9 per cent reporting relationship dissatisfaction compared to 12.1 per cent for women without [sexual dysfunction](#).

They were also more than twice as likely to suffer postnatal depression.

"Caring for a baby over the long term and paying a lot of attention to him or her results in parents who are exhausted and often suffer from sleep deprivation," Dr Khajehei says.

"The intimate relationship of the couple could be severely affected by dedicating less time to each other, in combination with other factors such as social and cultural issues and changes in emotional status."

The good news is that parents with more than one child appear to have fewer relationship issues, either from having older children who pitch-in or perhaps just a better understanding of the demands of being a parent.

Provided by Science Network WA

Citation: Sex life wanes for more than half of new mums (2015, June 18) retrieved 9 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-06-sex-life-wanes-mums.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--