

# FACTS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT SEX

## Sex Facts Checklist

**Directions:** Discuss each of the following generalizations about male/female sexuality with your partner to find out if any are accurate to your relationship:

### Sexual Drives, Desires, and Rejection

- Men need sex to feel connected.
  - Women need to feel connected (through talking, romance, or affection) to want sex.
- Men are usually aware of sexual urges prior to sexual contact.
  - Women often are not aware of feeling aroused until they are sexually stimulated.
- Tension and stress can trigger a man's arousal system and aid performance.
  - Women need to relax and open up to enjoy sex. Stress and constantly caring for others can inhibit sexual responsiveness.
- Unusual ideas or waking a man up to have sex can excite him because of the above.
  - Pressuring a woman to try "unusual" activities or waking her up to have sex can kill her desire.
- Sexual rejection will feel doubly painful when a man is aroused. After too much rejection, a man may lose his sexual desires.
  - A woman needs to feel safe to say "No" to sex, or she may lose her desire to say "Yes."
- When women initiate sex regularly, men can feel worse about themselves (due to performance pressure) and eventually lose all interest. A man needs clear messages that his partner loves sex with him (without feeling pressure to perform) to maintain interest.
  - Women may appreciate a man regularly initiating sex as long as he can read her "signals" when she is too exhausted or tense and be willing to settle for hugs and cuddles.
- Expressing confidence in a man's sexual expertise can arouse him.
  - When a man appears confident in his sexual expertise, a woman may feel aroused.
- Sexual discussions can turn a man off if he isn't in the mood.
  - Talking about a woman's feelings without pressure to have sex can help her mood.

### Arousals and Orgasms

- A man first needs direct stimulation of his penis to "wake up" other erogenous zones (testicles, perineum, or other areas.)
  - A woman may first need her least erogenous zones (feet, thighs, etc.) caressed for her to be comfortable having her breasts, nipples, or clitoris stimulated.
- Men need a direct approach for an orgasm, which can take five minutes or less.
  - Women need an indirect, teasing approach (moving toward and away from erogenous zones), which can take 20 minutes or more.
- Men are usually consistently capable of orgasms due to steady levels of testosterone.
  - Women are not always capable of having orgasms or enjoying certain types of touch due to constantly changing ratios of estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men may be more likely to have one routine sexual approach due to consistent hormonal levels.</li> <li>◦ Women may need different types or amounts of stimulation because of varying hormone levels.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men need orgasms to be satisfied because sexual pleasure comes from releasing tension.</li> <li>◦ Women can be satisfied with closeness without having an orgasm because they enjoy the building of tension and like the intimacy that comes with penetration.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men need occasional quickies to maintain sexual interest and have the patience to regularly focus on their partner's needs.</li> <li>◦ Women need quickies for times when they are not capable of having orgasms or when they are too exhausted for longer lovemaking.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arousal enhances a man's visual appreciation of his partner's body.</li> <li>◦ Insecurities about appearance unnecessarily inhibit a woman's sexual desires.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a woman responds with sexual sounds, men feel validated and aroused.</li> <li>◦ When a man makes love verbally ("I love your . . ." "You're so . . .") women are often aroused because they feel a sense of connection and are reassured about their bodies.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A man can be pushed out of control or turned off if a woman takes charge and tries too hard. A woman's sexual responses will arouse a man and help him last longer.</li> <li>◦ A woman's orgasms will be inhibited either by pressuring her to or by not giving her opportunities to have a climax. If sex regularly lasts too long, passion can die for both sexes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After his orgasm a man's desire disappears.</li> <li>◦ After her orgasm, a woman can enjoy penetration. It will not matter to her how long her partner's erection lasts if he gives her the opportunity to have an orgasm first.</li> </ul>

These "facts" are adapted from *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* by John Gray (HarperCollins, 1992)