

Frequent sex associated with greater enjoyment of life for men, but not jaded women: Study

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(NEW YORK) — Frequent sexual activity leads to greater enjoyment of life for men — but not for women, a new study has found.

For women, frequent kissing, petting, fondling, and feeling emotionally close to their partner was associated with higher enjoyment of life.

In a study of almost 7,000 people ages 50-89 in England, researchers correlated self-reported sexual activity in the past year with greater enjoyment of life in men and women.

Frequent sexual activity was defined by the study's authors as having sex more than twice per month, according to the study.

The data was obtained from the English Longitudinal Study of Aging, an ongoing long-term study of the English population above 50. Researchers examined sexual activity as a modifiable target in overall well-being, which has in turn been correlated with positive health outcomes.

“Previous research has suggested that frequent sexual intercourse is associated with a range of benefits for psychological and physiological well-being, such as improved quality of life and mental health, and lower risk of certain cancers and fatal coronary events,” said Dr. Lee Smith, Reader in Exercise Medicine at Anglia Ruskin University in a press release.

Although the women in this study did not report higher enjoyment of life following frequent sexual activity, previous studies in older women have associated sexual pleasure, and specifically orgasms, with increased longevity.

Beyond the benefits for individual men and women, encouraging older adults to have more sex may be beneficial to the health care system.

“Promoting well-being in later life is a public health priority...If encouraging and supporting people to continue to enjoy a healthy sex life in old age could help to boost well-being, there may be benefits both for the individual and for the sustainability of health services,” said Dr. Sarah Jackson from the UCL Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care in a press release.

Yet English adults have been shown to decrease their sexual activity substantially with age.

In a 2016 study, 94 percent of adults in their fifties reported being sexually active, which progressively declined to 31 percent in adults over 80.

Similar trends have been observed in American adults.

The authors acknowledge the type of study they conducted — anonymous, self-administered questionnaires at only one point in time — does not allow them to establish frequent sex as the cause of greater life enjoyment, as it is also possible that those who enjoy life more are in turn more likely to have sex.

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