

Her lady bits are on strike: Misconceptions about female pleasure men need to know

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The discourse around female pleasure is usually missing or is aimed at discouraging women from seeking it. Why comply? Sex experts share tips for men to break myths around female pleasure and achieve enhanced intimacy



The belief that female pleasure can be quickly or easily attained is a common fallacy that overlooks the nuanced and individualised aspects of women's sexual experiences. Photo Courtesy: iStock

Pratkisha Shah (34) is caught up in a bedchamber quandary. In a discrete conversation with Midday, she reveals: “My husband’s idea of how a woman finishes is skewed. It sprouts from watching adult films which are anything but misleading; as that’s not how it unfolds in reality.”

Shah is not completely wrong in her claims. Navigating intimacy in a relationship can sometimes be challenging, especially when it comes to aligning expectations with real experiences. While her husband’s misplaced notions about female pleasure are impacting their intimacy, there are deeper complexities than what meets the eye.

Leeza Mangaldas, sexuality educator and author of The Sex Book states, "Whether it's teachers or families, the discussion around female pleasure is missing or is aimed at discouraging women from striving for it. More so the society attaches shame and judgment to it and rarely highlights the enjoyable aspects of the experience."

Do the ladies and their partners relate to this? If yes, fret not as female sexuality is a subject that is widely misunderstood. To clear the air around this, Midday.com spoke to sex experts who break down how female arousal, desire, autonomy pleasure and orgasm work. Additionally, they share tools for men to break myths attached to female pleasure for **better intimacy**.

Common misconceptions around women's pleasure

Despite Shah's genuine appreciation for the intimacy they share, there are moments of discomfort such as during non-penetrative stimulation, which she found similar to undergoing a pap smear test. "While I do love our physical connection, I've never experienced orgasm during our encounters. Additionally, my attempts to initiate intimacy have been met with discouragement, as he thinks that his efforts are futile since I don't climax," mumbles Shah.

Men may abandon their efforts to satisfy their female partners for various reasons. It could stem from a lack of understanding about their partner's desires. Performance anxiety or a fear of not meeting expectations might also play a role.

Additionally, societal pressures and unrealistic expectations around masculinity can create stress, hindering the ability to focus on mutual pleasure. Sexologist and relationship expert – Dr Pavana S from Vidyaranyapura, Bengaluru breaks common misconceptions about women's pleasure:

All women orgasm the same way

Data suggests that preferences, desires and what brings pleasure can vary significantly from one woman to the next. However, many men mistakenly assume that all women derive pleasure in the same manner and thus do little to change their approach. This misconception often leads to mundane routines with unmet expectations and misunderstandings, ultimately leading to dissatisfaction.

Her lubrication is equivalent to male arousal

The misconception that vaginal lubrication is analogous to an erection creates a misleading belief that if women are sexually aroused, their vagina will lubricate. However, this stands incorrect. The occurrence of lubrication is subject to a phenomenon known as non-concordance, where arousal and physical responses may not align.

It's crucial to dispel this myth. Critically, some men may dismissively assert that their female partners don't understand their own bodies, citing dryness despite reported arousal. It is essential to prioritise a woman's subjective experience and communicate openly in order to develop a better understanding of her arousal.

Women should orgasm from penetration

The idea that women should consistently achieve orgasm through penetration alone is another common misconception. In reality, over 70 per cent of women do not reliably orgasm through penetrative sex, and this is entirely healthy and normal.

The clitoris, comparable to the penis in males, is a highly sensitive organ that becomes engorged with blood during sexual arousal. It extends internally into the vagina. For most women, achieving orgasm typically involves some degree of clitoral stimulation. Understanding and acknowledging the need for varied forms of stimulation can contribute to a more inclusive perspective on **women's sexual experiences**.

Women can achieve pleasure quickly

Instant gratification can contribute to a missing focus on female pleasure. The belief that female pleasure can be quickly or easily attained is a common fallacy that overlooks the nuanced and individualised aspects of women's sexual experiences.

In reality, achieving female pleasure often demands time, open communication and a profound understanding of individual needs. The emphasis on quick satisfaction may lead to a neglect of the diverse ways in which women experience pleasure, hindering the potential for a more fulfilling and mutually satisfying experience.

Orgasm-centric focus

The obsession with achieving orgasm as the sole benchmark of female pleasure perpetuates a narrow perspective that can lead to a dissatisfying sexual experience. This misconception overlooks the multifaceted nature of women's sexual pleasure, implying that fulfillment is solely contingent on climax.

In reality, women derive satisfaction from diverse aspects of intimacy, including emotional connection, communication and various forms of stimulation. An orgasm-centric focus may create performance pressure, anxiety and feelings of inadequacy for both partners, overshadowing the broader spectrum of enjoyable and meaningful elements within a sexual encounter.

Women fake their orgasms sometimes, here's why

A common observation in expert's practice is how little awareness women have about their own pelvic anatomy and erogenous zones. This often leads to a gap in expectations as women are unable to articulate their desires because of which, men might fail to navigate the intimate conundrum.

Kritika Khatri (24) shares why she resorts to faking orgasms. "The thing is, I hate to make people feel bad. Like they're doing something wrong when likely it's an issue with me. So, I've just faked my orgasms every single time I have ever been with someone."

Mumbai-based **relationship** coach, Anjali Tyagi informs, that one common motivation to fake orgasms is the desire to spare their partner's feelings. Women may worry about their partner feeling inadequate or responsible for their inability to climax, even if the issue is not related to their partner's performance.

The overbearing expectation that sexual encounters should culminate in orgasm can also contribute to this phenomenon, leading women to simulate pleasure to align with perceived norms. Additionally, some women may fake orgasms due to a lack of understanding about their own desires or discomfort in expressing their needs, choosing to prioritise their partner's feelings over their own satisfaction.

Communication barriers around sexual topics, fear of judgment and societal pressures to conform to unrealistic expectations contribute to the prevalence of faking orgasms. The reluctance to openly discuss preferences and address concerns can also lead to a cycle of dissatisfaction.

Tyagi opines that women need to be empowered by educating them about 'what's what' down there. Although biology books and Google images of a vulva may help despite that, many women find this hard to relate to and can't identify all of the parts of the vulva on themselves.

Tools for men to navigate female pleasure

Prioritise communication and active listening

Open and honest communication is the cornerstone of any satisfying intimate relationship. Experts opine that imitating conversations about desires, fantasies and boundaries can help bridge the gap. Encourage your partner to share her thoughts by asking about her preferences and understanding her needs. Also, pay attention not only to what she says but also to non-verbal cues during intimate moments.

Understand the complexity of female anatomy

Take the time to educate yourself about the intricacies of female anatomy. Recognise that pleasure is not limited to one specific area; it involves a combination of physical and emotional factors. Understand the role of the clitoris and play various tempos to land on the one that sits well with her. Pay attention to her responses and how she reacts to different styles of touches.

Extend the foreplay

It cannot be stressed enough that foreplay is a crucial component of **female pleasure**. Rather than rushing towards the showdown, prioritise extended periods of foreplay. This can be done by engaging in a variety of sensual activities to build anticipation and enhance arousal. This not only heightens physical pleasure but also strengthens the emotional connection.

Shift the focus from orgasm to overall pleasure

Move away from an orgasm-centric mindset. While orgasms can be enjoyable, emphasising overall pleasure and connection can lead to a more satisfying experience for both partners. Understand that women's satisfaction extends beyond achieving climax and encompasses the entire intimate journey.

Be attentive to emotional connection

Recognise the importance of emotional connection in fostering female pleasure. A strong emotional bond contributes to a sense of security and comfort, creating an environment where both partners can freely express themselves. Prioritise emotional intimacy alongside physical connection for a more fulfilling experience.

Resources on sex education**Books:**

"Come as You Are" by Emily Nagoski

"She Comes First" by Ian Kerner

"5 Love Language" by Gary Chapman

Online Platforms: Scarleteen, OMGYes and BetterHelp for relationship counselling.

(Shared by Dr Pavana S)

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