

# Having a partner, health impact postmenopausal sexual activity

July 31 2019

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(HealthDay)—Having a partner and good physical health are key factors

for continuation of sexual activity among postmenopausal women, according to a study published online July 8 in *Menopause*.

Helena Harder, Ph.D., from the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom, and colleagues assessed free-text data from the Fallowfield Sexual Activity Questionnaire. A total of 24,305 [postmenopausal women](#) completed the baseline questionnaire and 4,418 provided free-text data with comments eligible for analysis.

The researchers found that 65 percent of the women had a partner and 22.5 percent were sexually active. The authors derived four interrelated themes: partner availability, physical and [sexual health](#), mental well-being, and interpersonal relationships. Absence of sexual activity was primarily due to lack of a partner, mainly because of widowhood. Sexual activity was affected by a partner's medical conditions or sexual dysfunction (27 and 13.5 percent, respectively), women's own physical health or menopause-related symptoms (18 and 12.5 percent, respectively), and prescribed medication (7 percent). Researchers also noted the impact of low libido in self or partner (16 and 7 percent, respectively), relationship problems (10.5 percent), logistics (6 percent), and perceptions of aging (9 percent). Positive sexual experiences were rarely mentioned (3 percent), nor was seeking medical help for sexual problems (6 percent).

"Our findings have implications for [clinical practice](#) and not only show that [sexual activity](#) in [older women](#) is multifactorial, but also that sexual difficulties are often underreported, underrecognized and undertreated," the authors write.

Two authors disclosed financial ties to Abcodia LTD.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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Citation: Having a partner, health impact postmenopausal sexual activity (2019, July 31)  
retrieved 21 January 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-07-partner-health-impact-postmenopausal-sexual.html>

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