Dear Alice,

I need help. I have way too much endurance. While guys are worrying about impotence and premature ejaculation, I am plagued by the exact opposite. I go forever, often times too long. Many times during sex, I never climax. I need to know what I can do, or take, or what type of treatment I can get to fix my problem. Climaxing too soon sucks, but not climaxing at all really sucks even worse!! Please help.

Answer

Dear Reader,

Achieving the big bang, or orgasm, is at the forefront of many people's minds when it comes to thinking about sex. And while orgasm is sought after by people of all genders, focusing on the "O" may actually make it more difficult to attain. Some people find that enjoying sensations and concentrating on the moment, with or without a partner, can help a shy orgasm burst out onto the stage. Have you ever been able to climax during sex or masturbation? When? Each person's stamina is different and there's no standard period of time in which one has to climax.

Natural variation in stamina aside, there are some people who have difficulty orgasming or who may not orgasm at all. In some cases, the cause might involve psychological or physiological issues.

Sometimes having a lot of endurance, but difficulty climaxing, can be a side effect of certain prescription drugs, such as antidepressants. For some men, medications can cause problems with sexual desire. For others, these drugs may make it more difficult for them to have or maintain an erection, or even have an orgasm. If you're on meds, it can be helpful to speak with your health care provider about the possibility of lowering the dosage or changing the prescription. Sometimes using alcohol or recreational drugs, such as cocaine, can cause sexual difficulties as well. Have you had any of these in your system when you've experienced too much endurance? If so, see if your lengthy duration changes when you're not under the influence.

You said that many times during sex, you never climax. Answering the following questions may help you assess the situation.
When masturbating, are you able to orgasm? How long does it usually take you to come when masturbating?

Do you find that you have a more difficult time climaxing when you're with a partner?

If you have sexual intercourse, do you experience anxiety or fear or other feelings that may be preventing you from having an orgasm?

There are a number of reasons that the inability to orgasm may in fact be linked to what's going on (consciously or sub-consciously) in your head. Some people feel guilt or anxiety about having sex, which prevents them from letting go to the point that they are able to orgasm. Others have conditioned themselves to come under certain circumstances (alone, with a certain kind of lube, while watching porn) and may need to work on varying solo-stimulation techniques so that it's easier to come with a partner. Some folks can't come with a partner because they have difficulty allowing themselves to be intimate (with that person, or in general).

Treatment for lasting "too long" often involves changing some behaviors and consulting with a therapist. A therapist might suggest a step-by-step approach to becoming more comfortable coming when a partner is around. Sexual partners can start by focusing on enjoying sensations like kissing and touching, without any penetration. Next, one (or both) partners can masturbate in front of the other - this can help increase comfort with coming while someone else is present. Later, the couple can give each other hand jobs and/or oral sex to the point of orgasm. And finally, when both partners are comfortable with all of the above and able to consistently have an orgasm, it's back to trying penetration. This process may be more successful if you're able to talk with a therapist who is familiar with sexual concerns and can give you personalized strategies for a more explosive experience with your partner. Luckily, while it may take awhile to become comfortable orgasming with a partner, it can be a fun process of sharing each others likes, dislikes, and fantasies. To find a sex therapist in your area, look at the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT) [2] web site and click on the "Locate a Professional" link.

If you've ruled out physical causes, like prescription or recreational drugs, the next step may be to consider the psychological factors keeping your climax under wraps (for now...). Good luck,

Alice!

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