

Getting an erection after ejaculating (the full story) ^[1]

(1) Dear Alice,

I have trouble getting an erection after ejaculating. I wait 10-20 minutes, but it doesn't get too hard. It sometimes annoys my girlfriend. Is there anything I can do besides waiting till the next day?

-One Shot Wonder

(2) Dear Alice,

Are there methods through which men can regain their erection quickly following orgasm?

-Back for more

(3) Dear Alice,

I'm not really sure how to ask this question, so I'll try my best. I know that there is a certain period of time in which a man has to "recharge" after he cums. And I was wondering what the time period is before a man is "fully loaded" again, if there is any at all. Sincerely,

-Very Curious

Answer

Dear One Shot Wonder, Back for more, and Very Curious,

That recharging time you rightly refer to is called the refractory period. During the refractory period, which follows orgasm and ejaculation, men cannot be restimulated to orgasm and ejaculation. Women do not have a refractory period, and may be stimulated to another orgasm immediately after having had one.

How long does the refractory period last? There's no standard waiting time, so there's not much point in comparing. For some men, it's mere minutes before they can come again; for others, it takes hours, or even a good night's sleep. The length of the refractory period usually increases with age and differs from individual to individual and occasion to occasion. For young men, the refractory period is usually shorter or seemingly nonexistent; for older men, it is longer. Also,

some guys get soft during the refractory period, while others maintain erections.

Many things can affect the length of the refractory period, including:

- Stress
- Alcohol and/or other drug use
- Interest in having sex at the moment
- Positioning during sex (for example, a man might find that his refractory period is shorter when having sex in a sexual position he prefers)

Whatever you do, don't compare yourself to dudes in sexy movies who, with the help of their editors, appear to be ready for round two of intercourse seconds after orgasm. That's just not realistic for most men. Also, you may want to share this information with your partner to avoid any requests that you "perform" in manners that are unrealistic. Remember, there are many other things that you can do sexually without having an erect penis. Touching, kissing, or focusing on your partner may surprise you with interesting results. Get creative!

The concept of "reloading," by the way, is metaphorical, not an actual physiological event. In men, new sperm develop every minute. Ejaculation happens when mature sperm, stored in the epididymis, a tightly coiled tube that leads from the testis, are pumped to the vas deferens (where the seminal vesicle supplies the seminal fluid), and then to the prostate; the prostate muscle opens and the prostate gland pumps the seminal fluid into the urethra and out the urethral opening. At the time of ejaculation, most men orgasm. But ejaculation does not always occur with orgasm. Some men use tantra, a kind of yoga where sexuality is heightened to get closer to enlightenment, to train themselves to experience continual peaks of pleasure (orgasm) without ejaculating, thereby apparently eliminating the need for a refractory period.

Come again,

Alice!

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