

Can masturbation or using a sex toy desensitize the clitoris? And would my partner prefer her sex toy over me? ^[1]

(1)

Hi Alice,

I heard that masturbation causes desensitization of the clitoris and that after a while, a lady who masturbates a lot will not be able to have an orgasm by normal sexual intercourse. Is that true? And if it is, is there a way to fix that? Thank you.

(2)

hi alice,

my girlfriend and i bought her first sex toy, a 9" dildo for her, and i'm about an average size. my question is i'm worried about it taking over our sex life. the interesting thing is this is something i wanted at first as a fantasy come true, but now i'm wondering if she could be desensitized or want the plus size over me? is this an item i should be concerned with?

Answer

Dear Readers,

Good news for all the women who masturbate out there (and the people who love pleasing them) — the idea that frequent and regular masturbation causes desensitization or numbness of the clitoris, preventing women from orgasming during intercourse, is false. In fact, masturbation, with or without the aid of a sex toy, helps women increase their clitoral sensations, improving the quality of their orgasms. Many women masturbate regularly as a healthy part of their lives. Through masturbating, women (and men) can explore their bodies, discovering what feels good to them. Learning what feels good is an important step toward feeling pleasure more regularly. Gaining the information is a step toward teaching a partner how to please you.

Since some incorrectly believe that masturbating or using vibrators desensitizes the clitoris, many women and couples also fear adding vibrators to their sexual repertoire. While some women may experience mild discomfort after long or vigorous use of a vibrator, the effect is only temporary. This can even occur after longer, vibrator-free masturbation sessions or extended periods of oral

or vaginal intercourse. Using vibrators also causes no long-term risk of clitoral desensitization. So a woman's body will respond with pleasure once again to her fingers, vibrator, partner's touch, etc.

Some express concern over introducing sex toys into their partnered sexual play. They may fear that somehow their partner will begin to prefer the new stimulation or that they'll seek to replace them with a toy of a larger size. Michael Castleman, author of Great Sex: A Man's Guide to the Secret Principals of Total Body Sex, reminds men that "even the best carpenters use power tools." Vibrators and dildos may help women orgasm or orgasm faster, or simply provide a new type of stimulation to a couple's sexual activities. Sex toys, however, can't vocalize one's desire, be emotionally supportive, hug, or kiss a partner. They are enhancements, not substitutes or replacements, that can allow one partner to please the other in a new, different, and/or enhanced way. They can't take the place of the emotional, human bond and intimacy that you and your partner share.

Normal sexual intercourse? Maybe you mean penile-vaginal intercourse, accompanied by orgasm for both, ending the process. However, what one person sees as normal sexual expression, another person may find unusual or unappealing. In addition, only about 30 percent of women orgasm through penile-vaginal intercourse alone. Because the nerve endings are in the clitoris, and not the vagina, using hands, fingers, a vibrator, or even pubic bones and hips to place pressure on and pleasure the clitoris during intercourse or sexual play increases the chance for orgasm.

Masturbation, with or without the use of sex toys, can relieve stress, teach someone about her/his body, and can give oneself and a partner another dimension of pleasure. In a healthy sexual relationship, fears about desensitization or of a partner being "replaced" by a sex toy are nothing to be concerned about. So feel free to explore the pleasures that come from exploring one's body — women can masturbate and couples can vibrate to their heart's and clitoris's content.

Alice!

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- [1] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/can-masturbation-or-using-sex-toy-desensitize-clitoris-and-would-my-partner>
- [2] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/sexual-reproductive-health>
- [3] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/masturbation>
- [4] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/tools-toys>
- [5] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/too-much-masturbation-affects-orgasms>
- [6] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/my-penis-no-match-vibrator>
- [7] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/difference-between-clitoral-and-vaginal-orgasm>
- [8] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/too-much-sex-leads-desensitized-clitoris-0>
- [9] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/how-choose-new-vibrator>
- [10] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/safety-tips-male-sex-toys>