

NEW VIEW OF WOMEN'S SEXUAL PROBLEMS

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I. SEXUAL PROBLEMS DUE TO SOCIO-CULTURAL, POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC FACTORS

A. Ignorance and anxiety due to inadequate sex education, lack of access to health services, or other social constraints:

P Lack of vocabulary to describe subjective or physical experience.

P Lack of vocabulary about human sexual biology and life-stage changes.

P Lack of information about how gender roles influence men's and women's sexual expectations, beliefs, and behaviours.

P Inadequate access to information and services for contraception and abortion, STD prevention and treatment, sexual trauma, and domestic violence.

B. Sexual avoidance or distress due to perceived inability to meet cultural norms regarding correct or ideal sexuality, including:

P Anxiety or shame about one's body, sexual attractiveness, or sexual responses.

P Confusion or shame about one's sexual orientation or identity, or about sexual fantasies or desires.

C. Inhibitions due to conflict between sexual norms of one's subculture or culture of origin and those of the dominant culture.

D. Lack of interest, fatigue, or lack of time due to family and work obligations.

II. SEXUAL PROBLEMS RELATING TO PARTNER AND RELATIONSHIP

A. Inhibition, avoidance, or distress arising from betrayal, dislike, or fear of partner, partner's abuse or couple's unequal power, or arising from partner's negative patterns of communication.

B. Discrepancies in desire for sexual activity or in preferences for various sexual activities.

C. Ignorance or inhibition about communicating preferences or initiating, pacing, or shaping sexual activities.

D. Loss of sexual interest and reciprocity as a result of conflicts over commonplace issues such as money, schedules, or relatives, or resulting from traumatic experiences, eg, fertility or the death of a child.

E. Inhibitions in arousal or spontaneity due to partner's health status or sexual problems.

III. SEXUAL PROBLEMS DUE TO PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

A. Sexual aversion, mistrust, or inhibition of sexual pleasure due to:

P Past experiences of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.

P General personality problems with attachment, rejection, co-operation, or entitlement.

P Depression or anxiety.

B. Sexual inhibition due to fear of sexual acts or of their possible consequences, eg, pain during intercourse, pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, loss of partner, loss of reputation.

IV. SEXUAL PROBLEMS DUE TO MEDICAL FACTORS

Pain or lack of physical response during sexual activity despite a supportive and safe interpersonal situation, adequate sexual knowledge, and positive sexual attitudes.
Such problems can arise from:

A. Numerous local or systemic medical conditions affecting neurological, neurovascular, circulatory, endocrine or other systems of the body.

B. Pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, or other sex-related conditions.

C. Side effects of many drugs, medications, or medical treatments.

D. Iatrogenic conditions.