Sex at Any Age

Sexual activity may decline postmenopause, but it doesn’t have to disappear | By Carol Saline

About a year ago, I found myself discussing vaginal lubricants with my 20-year-old granddaughter who was in the throes of her first major romance. She was raving about a silicone-based lubricant that she and her boyfriend enjoyed. Since I was only aware of water-based lubricants, I was curious. “Want to try it?” she asked. “Sure,” I answered. And before I could change my mind, we were driving to the local sex emporium—with the boyfriend along for the ride.

Was I uncomfortable? You bet! But, I told myself, this is a new era, change my mind, we were driving to...
“Are you kidding? We’ve got a lively market of older people,” she said. “A woman came in just before you who wanted to buy a porn movie and I showed her how to get it for free on her phone. They aren’t embarrassed anymore.”

We talked about her 100 varieties of vibrators (who knew?), her favorite lubes (like Sliquid, which is water-based and paraben-free), different types of vaginal dilators for women who experience painful intercourse, and more. I also learned that if you are single, divorced or widowed and getting naked again, you should be using a condom to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. Age is no protection. My visit to The Pleasure Chest was a delightful and unexpected crash course in sexual fun. If you want to improve your sex life, I encourage you to visit one of these places, either alone or with your partner.

If, for whatever reason, you are no longer having intercourse, sex educator Wołosińska-Wruble of Hadassah Hospital stressed that penetration is only one expression of sexual activity. “Let’s not forget,” she said, “our bodies are blessed with nerve endings from head to toe. The largest sex organ is our skin, and the most active sex organ is our mind.”

The new buzzword in sex therapy is outercourse, an umbrella term for sensual and sexual activity without intercourse. “You are never too old to rebuild your sexual toolkit with other forms of erotic inspirations,” said Sari Cooper, a certified sex therapist and director of Center for Love and Sex in New York City. She recommends kissing, mutual masturbation, reading each other erotic stories, oral sex and erotic massage.

Perhaps the best advice I got came from my new friend at The Pleasure Chest. “Look,” said Mannino. “You don’t ignore taking care of your eyes or your teeth as you get older. Why wouldn’t you maintain your aging sex organs? You can only spend so much time gardening!”

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