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Premature Ejaculation

Luke was nervous about his date with Stephanie. They had been out several times now. Every time he saw her, he sensed that they were getting physically closer. He found himself wondering what sex would be like with her. And he got a vibe from her that she was thinking along those lines, too. Tonight could be the night.

There was a problem though. In the past, Luke had had problems with premature ejaculation (PE). He couldn't last much more than a minute before he climaxed. He worried that he disappointed past partners because of it. The situation embarrassed him and was very concerned about Stephanie's reaction if it happened with her.

Luke isn't alone. PE is estimated to affect between 3% and 30% of men. In more specific terms, PE occurs when a man ejaculates before he and his partner wish it to happen. That time frame can vary depending on the couple, but many definitions use one to two minutes as a guideline.

Unfortunately, PE can make men quite insecure. They may feel ashamed and awkward. They may fear being ridiculed or perceived as inexperienced, too eager, or lacking self-control.

Many men with PE are too embarrassed to seek help and too distressed to discuss the situation with a partner. Some single men avoid relationships because they're afraid of a partner's response.

But a study from last year could put men's minds at ease.

In January 2013, the *Archives of Sexual Behavior* published a study that involved 461 men with PE and 80 partners. Using an online questionnaire, the researchers surveyed the participants about their experiences with PE, their levels of distress over it, and their sexual satisfaction.

The researchers found that the men were more distressed about PE than their partners were. The men also tended to think their partners were more distressed and dissatisfied than they actually were.

So men with PE can relax a little. But that doesn't mean that PE isn't a problem.

What can be done?

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Here are some tips. Keep in mind that involving your partner with your treatment decisions can be helpful. Work together as a team.

- See a doctor. PE can be treated. Sex therapy can help men better understand PE and the reasons behind it. Therapists can also suggest ways to develop ejaculatory control. They might assign “homework” – but that can be fun.

Drug therapy may be another option. Topical medications, applied to penis before sex, can desensitize the penis – not so much you won’t feel sexual sensations, but just enough to put off ejaculation for a bit. Other drugs are taken in pill form and work on brain mechanisms associated with ejaculation.

If you decide to take medication for PE, be sure to do so under a doctor’s care. Only a qualified physician can prescribe the appropriate medication for you.

- Talk to your partner. It’s very possible that your partner is not bothered by your PE, or at least not as much as you think. Be open and honest. If you feel inadequate, say so. Chances are, your partner will reassure you. And remember, your partner is there to have a pleasurable sexual experience with you. Ejaculation is just one part of that experience.

Don’t be afraid to discuss PE with a new partner. Sharing your feelings can go a long way in building trust and you might find yourself more relaxed, leading to a better experience for both of you.

- Remember that PE is subjective. Every couple is different. There’s no definitive time frame for ejaculation and no reason to compare yourself to others. No matter when a man ejaculates, if both partners are satisfied, there’s no problem.

What do you think? Have you or your partner experienced premature ejaculation? How did you feel about it? Did it affect your relationship? Feel free to tell us your story in the comments.

Resources

Archives of Sexual Behavior

Kempeneers, Philippe, et al.

“Functional and Psychological Characteristics of Belgian Men with Premature Ejaculation and Their Partners”

(Abstract. January 2013)

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10508-012-9958-y>

Everyday Health

Berman, Laura, PhD

“Must Read! 5 Men’s Sexual Health Breakthroughs of 2013”

(December 14, 2013)

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/columns/dr-laura-berman-on-love-and-sex/top-5-mens-sexual-health-stories-of-2013/>

International Society for Sexual Medicine

“Patient Information Sheet – Premature Ejaculation”

(December 2010)

http://www.issm.info/images/uploads/issm_patient_infosheet_lr.pdf

WunmiOmololu.com

Omololu, Wunmi

“Premature Ejaculation”

(Blog post. September 13, 2012)

<http://wunmiomololu.com/blog/premature-ejaculation/>