



Delayed Ejaculation

Delayed ejaculation is when a guy can get a rock-hard erection and have intercourse for a really long time, but can't ejaculate or he struggles to ejaculate. It doesn't matter if he's having oral, vaginal, or anal sex, or if his partner is giving him a handjob – either he can't ejaculate or it can take him close to forever. Or maybe he can come by masturbating in a certain way, but not with a partner. The problem is not in getting an erection and keeping an erection; rather it's with orgasm and ejaculation.

For those of you who have delayed ejaculation or are dealing with it in your relationship, be aware that very little research has been done on this subject and virtually none of it is the double-blind kind that you can take to the bank. Delayed ejaculation (DE) is poorly understood. No one has come up with a universal set of causes, physical or emotional.

There appear to be two different types of delayed ejaculation: the primary type, where a man has always had it, and the secondary type, where he was okay and then it starts to occur. If you have the secondary type, be sure to rule out physical causes such as diabetes, multiple sclerosis, pelvic surgery, dystonia, spinal cord injuries, or a tumor. Fortunately, these are rare causes of delayed ejaculation. Side effects from medications are more likely to be the culprits behind secondary DE.

Delayed Ejaculation: A Partner Speaks

A sex educator who uses *The Guide* in her college course has been married for more than thirty years to a man who has delayed ejaculation. She offered to write this section for partners of men with DE. What she says is more helpful than much of what's been written on the subject to date. Here goes:

I've been married to a man for 31 years who has never been able to ejaculate with me in the ordinary way. I married him knowing this was true, but thought we would be able to solve the problem. I didn't know that delayed ejaculation is the most difficult of the

sexual problems to solve, even more difficult than desire discrepancy.

Early in our relationship, I looked this up in a book on sexual problems by Masters and Johnson who were famous sex researchers. I discovered that they had only worked with a handful of men with this problem; mostly couples who were worried about whether the women could become pregnant. They used the technique of the man masturbating to the “point of no return” and then the woman would get on top and the man would ejaculate inside her. If the couple was able to do this, then this was considered a successful outcome.

We were able to do this and have two beautiful daughters who are now grown. However, that did not feel like a success to me and my husband was not really interested in doing this for recreational sex. We have explored a lot of sex therapy and psychotherapy, individually and together trying to come to terms with this.

As Paul describes in this chapter, my husband has a style of masturbation that is very hard to duplicate with my hand, let alone with my vagina. It is very, very fast and very hard. He has had some success changing his masturbation style, but because it is difficult for him to orgasm. Even when masturbating, it is hard for him to want to change his style. Because of this, I have never been able to bring him to orgasm in any way, orally, anally, vaginally or manually.

Overall, I think my husband has come to see this as normal for him; he has never been any different with any other partner. I have had to accept that this sexual style is not something that he really wants to spend a lot more time or energy worrying about. After all these years, we still like to be sexual together, and I count my blessings. He really likes intercourse and has no problem with erections. Unfortunately, I am one of those women who don't come with vaginal stimulation only, so I don't get the benefit of having a partner with this problem that some women do.

Here are some things I've learned that might help the partner married to someone with DE:

🕶️ DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY. IT IS NOT ABOUT YOU! I am a skilled and experienced lover and have never thought that my vagina wasn't tight enough or I wasn't sexy enough to please him. Also, he had this problem with all previous lovers.

🕶️ Don't decide it is a sickness or a pathology. In one of the articles that Paul mentions, the author talks about a bell curve of sexual responsiveness on which men and women naturally fall. Some men and women orgasm extremely easily and some orgasm with a lot of difficulty. Most are somewhere in between. Rather than thinking there is something wrong with your partner, try to think of DE as something he is born with, like dark hair or intelligence or needing glasses.

🕶️ Don't marry him if you need him to change. It may be impossible and it's better to go into it knowing that.

🕶️ Use your sexuality as an opportunity to develop greater intimacy. Talk to each other, use the ideas that are in this book, improve communication, have fun. Focus on loving your partner and feeling emotionally connected and physically close.

🕶️ Don't fall into the trap of "goal-oriented" sex instead of "pleasure-oriented sex". Goal oriented sex says that all good sex ends with orgasm. Pleasure-oriented sex says that any sexual behaviors that feel good count as sex.

🕶️ Count your blessings and enjoy the fact that you will never be able to do "cookie cutter sex". Use it as a way to rebel against the Hollywood myth of perfect sex and keep it creative and fun.

🕶️ Don't tell too many friends about this. They will never have heard of it and will think it is really weird and will make you feel worse, most likely.

Looking Under the Hood of Delayed Ejaculation

Delayed ejaculation used to be known as retarded ejaculation, until we decided that calling a man a "retarded ejaculator" was a bit harsh. Some people refer to it as inhibited ejaculation, and those who

are trying to sound medical refer to it as a DED, diminished ejaculatory disorder.

How many men have delayed ejaculation? We aren't really sure. The guesses range from 1% to 4%, but even if it were only 0.5%, that's still a lot of guys whose corks won't pop. This condition can present itself differently in different men. It can be intermittent or it can happen every time. It can be lifelong or something that crept up along the way. It can be mild, moderate, severe, or super severe.

If you are stopwatch obsessed and hellbent on quantifying delayed ejaculation, consider that an average guy lasts somewhere between three and eight minutes during intercourse. One researcher has cooked the various standard deviations of how long an average intercourse lasts and suggests if you can't come after 25 to 30 minutes of thrusting, then you probably qualify as having delayed ejaculation. But here's a problem: for some couples, 25 minutes is just getting warmed up, while for others 25 minutes would be a nightmare of excess. So in order to declare a man has delayed ejaculation, both he and his partner need to consider it a problem. There are also situations when a man is able to come after fifteen minutes, but his partner wishes he were done after five. And forget calling it delayed ejaculation if it only happens when a man is using a condom.

What's particularly fascinating about delayed ejaculation is that the majority of men who have it are able to ejaculate when they masturbate. It's when you put a flesh-and-blood partner between the guy's hand and his penis that he usually has the problem. It can get so bad that his intercourse partner is able to figure out the plot lines to her next three novels before he's even close to coming.

As you'll see, there can be numerous factors that contribute to how fast or slow a man comes, from the biology he was born with to how he processes things like excitement and anxiety. While one man with delayed ejaculation might respond to X, Y, or Z, another man might do better with A, B and C, and a third won't respond no matter what. So we'll take a shotgun approach and mention a number of possibilities. Your job is to decide which, if any, apply to your situation.

Delayed Ejaculation vs. Faster Than a Speeding Bullet

Let's start with biology. A man might be pre-disposed to delayed ejaculation if he has a slow stick for a penis that's not as sensitive as

most other guys, or if his body is wired in such a way that he needs to reach a higher level of excitement than others before his ejaculation button gets triggered. He can't do any more to change the way he's wired than you can blink your eyes and your Ford will magically turn into a Maserati or your Suburban into a Prius. So let's focus on some of the possible work-arounds you might consider.

And yes, if you suffer from premature ejaculation and come faster than Han Solo in a Millennium Falcon, you might be thinking, "What's the big deal—I'll trade my premature ejaculation for his delayed ejaculation in a heartbeat." But unless you've been there and done that, it's hard to understand just how cumbersome or what a burden on a relationship DE can be. It can make sex hard work for both partners.

Although premature ejaculation and delayed ejaculation are on opposite sides of the spectrum, they both result in the man's ejaculation taking center stage. Instead of his being able to have fun with his partner and sharing pleasure, sex becomes more about his failure to ejaculate when he wishes he would.

Reverse Misogyny

Here's a caution about delayed ejaculation that you won't read elsewhere. Not many years ago we used to say that a woman who couldn't have an orgasm from intercourse was "frigid." We would give her a medical diagnosis as if she had a disease. While "frigid" is nicer than "retarded" as in retarded ejaculation, we now consider ourselves more enlightened. We tell people today that a lot of women can't have orgasms during intercourse and it's completely normal if they have their orgasms from masturbation. In other words, we've tried to make the female orgasm something a woman is allowed to have by her own hand, rather than it being an experience she needs to put on parade during intercourse.

We are neither as kind nor as generous with men. If a man can only come from masturbation but not intercourse, we call him a retarded ejaculator. He feels horrible about himself, and his partner is sure it's because he doesn't find her sexually appealing. Or she thinks it's because she can't do anything good for him in a sexual way. So sex can become a source of dread and anxiety for both partners.

If you are a man or a couple with this problem, why not at least try to remember that there are plenty of ways you can enjoy intercourse

and sexual intimacy without needing an ejaculation to signal that you are crossing the lovemaking finish line. What if you agree on a signal your partner can give during intercourse for when she or he is satisfied and wants to stop? This takes the pressure off of both of you.

Women have used a “Let’s stop having intercourse” signal since the beginning of time. It’s called faking an orgasm. If men could do that as easily, few people would know there was such a thing as DE.

Beyond the Basic Symptom

Let’s look at some of the possible causes and treatments of delayed ejaculation with an emphasis on the word “possible.” That’s because much of the current information is based on anecdote, which means if it is real science, it’s only real science by accident. Please keep in mind that what follows is strictly for informational purposes. This is not meant to take the place of a meeting with your healthcare provider, although few healthcare providers will have a clue on how to deal with delayed ejaculation.

It’s important to be sensitive about both sexual partners. A couple’s chemistry, ability to talk it over, and willingness to deal with the matter are critical if they hope to make progress. And if a man tends to be the passive partner, helping him deal with his delayed ejaculation will require that he step out of his comfort zone.

Patience, Prudence, Drug Side Effects and More

If you’re the kind who’s looking for a magic pill, it’s unlikely the ejaculation gods will be blowing many sticky kisses your way. If you want it to be like TV talk shows where patients solve massive problems in the span of two commercials, forget it. And good luck if your goal is to be like porn stars—where the male actors are human thrust-and-come machines who have no emotions. (Actually, some sex therapists believe a lot of male porn stars suffer from delayed ejaculation; they’ve just managed to make a career out of it.)

Speaking of magic pills, you want to rule out the possibility that the ejaculation problem is a side effect of drugs or medications you are taking, anti-depressants are at the top of a list of possible causes that includes antipsychotic medications, methadone, heroin, opiates, other analgesics, tranquilizers, sedatives, medications to lower your blood pressure, muscle relaxers, pregabalin, gabapentin, benzos, GHB, poppers, marijuana, cocaine, alcohol, and possibly cigarette smoking. But

don't assume that prescription drugs will include delayed ejaculation as a possible side effect on their warning labels. There are medications that don't list heart attacks as a possible side effect when they probably should, so don't expect them to put "delayed ejaculation" on the side of the box even if they truly do cause problems with ejaculation.

If your problem with DE has not been lifelong, try to think back to when it began. Did you start taking any new medications around that time? Also, delayed ejaculation can be secondary to erection problems, or these conditions can occur in tandem. So if you aren't having good erections, see if your healthcare provider can help you with that.

You want to be sure that delayed ejaculation isn't due to neurological problems, multiple sclerosis, spinal-cord injury, diabetes, thyroid issues, prostate-related problems, certain surgeries, or other pelvic unpleasanties. Low testosterone can be a suspect. Most cases of DE aren't caused by drugs or disease, but it's important to rule out these possibilities.

Religion, Abuse, and Other Possible Semen Stoppers

You might explore whether there were any traumatic psycho-social events that occurred around the time when you started coming slower than a slug in Super Glue. Did you come home unexpectedly to find your wife and best friend going at it with her screaming, "I've never come like this with that loser husband of mine!"?

Religious prohibitions about sex can be a contributing factor for men with delayed ejaculation. One study found that a disproportionate number of men with delayed ejaculation were raised in conservative religious homes or had conservative religious beliefs. Even without a religious upbringing, guilt and shame can be serious issues.

Another possible psychological semen stopper is if a man is having fears about his partner becoming pregnant. Deep-seated anger and having a withholding personality should also be evaluated. However, if anger, conservative religious upbringing and fears of getting your partner pregnant were the sole causes of delayed ejaculation, almost all men would suffer from it at one time or another.

Is Your Penis Lying?

The erect penis of a man with delayed ejaculation sometimes lies. This can be confusing, because when a guy is sporting a seriously hard penis, you assume he's highly aroused. But that might not be the case.

Even though a man is really hard, he might not be allowing himself to experience as much sexual excitement as other guys with hard-ons. To use psychological jargon, his erection might be out of sync with his emotional or internal state. If that's the case, he may need to work on increasing the level of sexual excitement that he allows himself to feel. Focusing on the sensations that make him feel good sexually might be helpful.

Sometimes men with delayed ejaculation are so focused on giving their partner pleasure that they won't let themselves be aware of their own sexual excitement, or they don't take in enough pleasure to orgasm.

Too Much Focus, Too Little Excitement

To help make his partner feel better, some men with DE will try so hard to ejaculate that they focus on their penis at the expense of the rest of their body. This can make a man even more numb to his own sexual excitement. So consider exploring the erogenous zones of a man's body from head to toe—and not just trying to find some magic spot or button that makes him ejaculate. Try to discover some of the subtle things that feel good and work on talking more easily about them. For some men, this might include long lingering kisses up and down the side of the neck or on his chest, nipples, back, or maybe a finger up his bum. Experiment and explore. Or you can get seriously Cosmo and run silk scarves or soft make-up brushes up and down his body. You might try to stimulate his genitals at the same time that you are kissing his neck or nipples.

Again, the goal of this approach is to focus on pleasure rather than on orgasm. You're trying to help him experience more pleasure and excitement. Technically, you're trying to storm the guard that's keeping sensation away from his orgasm trigger. You'll also need to be sensitive to how much he can handle. Some men will enjoy whatever you've got to throw at them. Others will reach a point of overload, after which all you are doing is increasing their resistance.

Note: Some therapists advise that the man not attempt to have intercourse until he can actually feel that he's sexually excited as opposed to just having an erection. Hopefully, you really will focus on pleasure as opposed to ejaculation. Sex is about sharing pleasure. Even if he never ejaculates, he might learn how to feel more pleasure and joy than guys who are able to ejaculate when they want.

Harsh Masturbation Techniques as the Cause? Pros and Cons

One of the few researchers who has actually studied delayed ejaculation feels that super vigorous or unusual masturbation habits can be a contributor in some cases. He thinks that changing masturbation habits is essential in situations where the guy pounds his meat like he's making chicken fried steak. He often tries to get the man to stop masturbating for several weeks or months, with the hope that he will have to rely on his partner to help him come. When the man does masturbate, a goal is to masturbate in a way that is kinder and gentler. She might try using his other hand or perhaps use lube in a way that makes masturbation feel more like intercourse.

On the other hand, it could be that the man's penis is less sensitive to begin with or his threshold to reach ejaculation is higher, so he learned to masturbate the way he did because it's the only way he can have an orgasm. If that's the case, his strange way of masturbating isn't the cause of the problem, but the result of it.

Masturbating face down is also thought by some to contribute to delayed ejaculation. If you have trouble coming and masturbate face down, see if you can teach yourself to start stroking it when you are on your back or while standing up.

However, there are plenty of men who pound their meat mercilessly and have no trouble ejaculating during partner sex. There may also be guys who masturbate face down and whose partners find them to be prolific comers. But still, it's hard to see a downside to easing up on the grip, or to masturbate face up rather than face down, or to turn over the reins to a significant other.

The Role of Fantasies

It's possible that some men with DE have certain fantasies they need in order to get off. But the realities of having sex with a partner might get in the way of being able to call up those fantasies.

Let's say a guy has a secret fantasy where his partner is stroking his penis with her feet, or maybe she's dressed in a corset, or she pees on him, or he or she is being gang raped or someone is forcing him to have sex with another guy. These fantasies might work great for him when he's strokin' it alone, but how does he lose himself in them when he is having intercourse with a real-live partner?

One of the challenges for he and his partner will be to allow enough of the fantasy to safely emerge to help him get off during intercourse. This means that exploring masturbation fantasies might be fruitful in some cases of delayed ejaculation. This might not be a problem if what turns him on is his partner wearing a certain bra or a pair of pantyhose with the crotch cut out. Most women won't be offended by those kind of requests; some will even be turned on by them.

But things can get a little dicey when his fantasies are at the extreme end of good taste and propriety or when he feels guilty about them. It can be particularly difficult to share a fantasy with a partner when he needs the same rigid scenario to get off each and every time.

For That Rare Man Who Doesn't Abuse Himself

There are situations when a man with delayed ejaculation can't or won't masturbate. If that's the case, you might start to explore the reasons and beliefs that are behind that decision. This will require introspection, which is not the hallmark of all men, let alone those with delayed ejaculation. Some men who are too embarrassed to masturbate might try doing it in stages. They can start while they are home alone, and work up to where they can do it when their partner is home but in a different room. Eventually they might try to do it when she's in the same room but with the lights off.

When Porn Might Help

It could be helpful for a man to watch porn just before or while he is making love. It might increase his level of stimulation or excitement. This could theoretically help him learn to ejaculate during intercourse, or at least learn to associate ejaculation with the feelings of intercourse. Think of it as the ejaculatory equivalent of using training wheels. On the other hand, there's absolutely no science to back any of this up.

Streaming your favorite porn while making love might not sit too well with your partner. Or it could be absolutely fine with her. So it's important to talk it over first. Also, porn might help a person with ADHD to focus better while making love.

When Porn Might Hurt

As a result of watching so much porn, a guy may have conditioned himself to need more visual stimulation than most men in order to come.

It's unlikely he'll get the kind of visual hyperstimulation from real-life lovemaking that he gets from porn.

If you watch a lot of porn and have delayed ejaculation, weaning yourself from porn might be a sensible thing to try.

Training Yourself To Feel Less Sensation

A consultant to this book offered his own theory on DE. When most men feel the sensations that tell them they are about to ejaculate, they choose between letting themselves ejaculate or slowing down or changing positions in order to delay coming. However, some men with delayed ejaculation seem to have trained themselves to automatically go the other way once they start to feel an increase in sensation. They mentally decrease what they feel even though they are still thrusting at the same speed.

This specialist advises the men to stop intercourse once they have blocked sensation more than three times in one session of lovemaking. He feels that to keep thrusting simply reinforces the tendency to delay ejaculation, which only teaches men to become even better at delaying ejaculation. This is anecdote rather than science, but it might have meaning for some readers.

Old Advice vs. New

It used to be that the advice for dealing with delayed ejaculation was to try having intercourse in novel situations or in places where there might be additional excitement from the lack of familiarity, like in the kitchen or in the back seat of a car. However, this isn't mentioned as much in the more recent articles on delayed ejaculation.

This novel-situation approach attempts to distract the man from his usual modus operandi where he's thought to be the master of control. The goal is to help him relinquish his need for control, assuming that's one of the things that might be causing the problem.

Another strategy has been to have the man bring himself close to ejaculating with his own hands, and then quickly put his penis in his partner's vagina and begin to thrust away. Hopefully he is able to ejaculate, and he can start to appreciate that he can ejaculate inside of his partner without the world coming to an end. However, this assumes that he and his partner will find this to be of value as opposed to being yet another form of torture and torment.

Imagine What Would Happen If...

Sex therapists sometimes ask couples to imagine what would happen if the problem would suddenly disappear. The point of this is to see if fears or concerns might emerge. Is there something about the problem that's keeping both partners within a certain comfort zone? Would the man's partner worry he'd want sex more often if he didn't have the problem? Would he be tempted to try his newfound skills on other women? Would he be concerned his partner might make new demands on him. Would he sense a loss of control? None of these fears need to be grounded in reality to be impacting sexual response.

ADD, ADHD, Bipolar Issues and Abuse As Contributors

A sex therapist who has treated men with DE believes that some of his patients with attention deficit and bipolar issues could have trouble reaching high enough levels of sexual excitement to ejaculate when having sex with a partner. This is because they are tuning in to everything in the room as opposed to the sex they are having. He wonders whether some of these men watch porn while having intercourse in order to help them focus on the sex so they can eventually ejaculate.

If you have delayed ejaculation and struggle with attention issues, perhaps this therapists observations will be meaningful for you. While no one is encouraging you to have porn blaring on a 60-inch screen during intercourse, perhaps there are things you and your partner can do to help keep you more focused on the sex you are having and on the building excitement in your body.

This therapist has also seen men who were sexually abused as boys who he feels may have trouble ejaculating as a result.

Sex Toys?

Sex toys, including a vibrating cock ring or vibrating butt plug, might provide the extra stimulation that some men need to help them ejaculate. Unfortunately, there's no research to guide on this.

Are There Drugs That Can Help?

In a word, none, as of press time. No drugs have been approved for delayed ejaculation. Dopamine agonists and anti-serotonergic drugs have been tried, but side effects can be significant and there doesn't appear to be anything on the immediate horizon.

Thanks to Stephen Braveman, Joe Marzucco and Michael Perelman.