



## Intimacy and Illness: Diabetes

### What is diabetes?

Diabetes, also known as diabetes mellitus, is a disease caused when the body does not produce or properly use insulin, a hormone that converts sugar, starches, and other food into energy. As a result, sugar builds up in the bloodstream. There are many types of diabetes, but the most common are Type 1, Type 2, and gestational diabetes. With Type 1 diabetes, a person's body does not produce any insulin. People with Type 2 diabetes produces insulin, but their cells have become resistant to it. Gestational diabetes occurs during pregnancy and usually disappears after the birth of the baby.

### Who gets diabetes?

Type 1 diabetes usually affects people under 30 years of age, although it can occur at any time throughout a person's life. Type 2 diabetes usually occurs after the age of 35, but can affect anyone at any time. Gestational diabetes occurs to some women during pregnancy. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes; 95% of people who have diabetes are afflicted by Type 2.

### What causes diabetes?

Type 1 diabetes is thought to be caused by genetics, an autoimmune disease, or environmental factors, although the origin is not fully understood (despite all of the research conducted). Type 2 diabetes is caused by lifestyle factors, such as diet, lack of exercise, and obesity. There may be a possible link between Type 2 diabetes and genetics.

### How can diabetes affect my sexuality?

Diabetes can affect men and women differently, and in a number of ways, including:

#### WOMEN

- An increase in vaginal or urinary tract infections
- Decreased libido/sexual desire
- Decreased vaginal lubrication
- Difficulty reaching orgasm
- Decreased genital sensitivity

#### MEN

- Erectile dysfunctions, such as difficulty achieving or maintaining an erection, or less rigid erections
- Decreased libido/sexual desire

### How can I improve my sexuality?

The use of a water-based vaginal lubricant should be used during sexual activity to ensure pleasure, comfort, and safety. Increasing the amount of time spent during foreplay can raise arousal and increase vaginal lubrication. If you are experiencing difficulty reaching orgasm, try clitoral stimulation. It might also be necessary to reexamine your definition of sexuality and intimacy. Experimenting with new stimulations and pleasures may be needed—things that may have been pleasurable for you before may no longer elicit the same response. Certain medications can help improve sexuality if affected by diabetes. Talk to your health care provider who can create a treatment plan that is specialized for you and your sexuality issues.





## What products does Pure Romance offer to help improve my sexuality?

If you find that you have a decreased libido or have a more difficult time reaching orgasm than before, you may want to try an arousal cream, such as Ex-T-Cee, Nympho Niagra, or X-Scream (X-Scream can be used by both men and women). It is also important to use a water-based vaginal lubricant each time you engage in sexual activity, which can help with vaginal dryness. Try Just Like Me or Sweet Seduction, which are both gentle and non-irritating. If you find that a water-based lubricant is not enough to help with vaginal dryness, try a vaginal moisturizer, such as Fresh Start, which is estrogen-free and very gentle.

For men experiencing difficulties with erectile dysfunction, a c-ring, such as JellyTool Belt, can be worn during intercourse and will help men acquire and maintain an erection. (It is highly recommended to use a thick, creamy lubricant, such as Whipped, when using a c-ring.)

You can also get other product recommendations from your Pure Romance Consultant or by visiting our Web site.

