

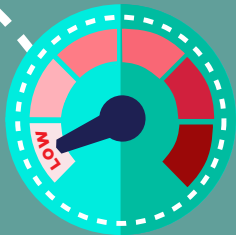
# Sexual Wellbeing & POI

## How POI Impacts Sexual Wellbeing

1

### Hormonal Changes:

- POI causes a drop in estrogen levels, which can lead to vaginal dryness and discomfort during sex.



2

### Menopause Symptoms:

- Hot flashes and night sweats can make you feel less interested in sex.
- Mood swings and irritability can affect your desire for intimacy.
- Sleep disturbance or insomnia can lead to tiredness.



3

### Emotional Impact:

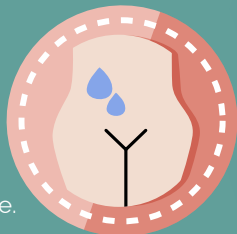
- Feelings of sadness, anxiety, and low self-esteem, can affect your sexual wellbeing.
- Concerns about fertility and body image can also impact sexual health.



4

### Physical Discomfort:

- Vaginal dryness can cause pain during sex, making it less enjoyable.
- Thinning of vaginal tissues can lead to irritation and discomfort.
- Urinary problems, such as needing to pass urine often or more urinary infections, can occur, especially after sex.



5

### Low libido (sex drive)

- Lower estrogen can also reduce libido
- Libido can also be affected by emotional and relationship factors



## What You Can Do:

### Talk to Your Doctor:

- Women often feel uncomfortable talking about sexual wellbeing but it is important to discuss your symptoms and concerns with your healthcare professional.
- Ask about treatments like hormone therapy or vaginal estrogen to help with dryness and discomfort.
- Testosterone therapy may help some women with low libido.
- Your doctor may refer you to a specialist if needed including a pelvic floor physical therapist, counsellor and/or sexual therapist.



### Use Vaginal Lubricants and Moisturisers:

- Water based lubricants can help reduce pain during sex.
- Hyaluronic acid-based moisturisers can be used regularly to keep the vaginal area comfortable.
- Choose a non-irritating product without perfume or parabens.



### Seek Support:

- Join in-person or online support groups for women with POI if available (e.g. Daisy Network) to share experiences and get advice. Infertility or cancer support groups may be helpful for some women.
- Counselling or therapy can help address emotional and psychological impacts.



### Reducing stress:

- Reducing stress through activities like yoga or meditation can help improve your mood and libido.



### Stay Connected:

- Communicate openly with your partner about your feelings and needs.
- Emotional support from your partner can improve your sexual wellbeing.



### Remember:

POI affects many aspects of life, including sexual wellbeing. It's important to seek help and support to manage these changes and maintain a fulfilling sexual life.

Ask Early Menopause



The free Ask Early Menopause App provides comprehensive, high quality POI and early menopause information, women's stories and support tools that are based on the latest evidence ([www.askearlymenopause.org](http://www.askearlymenopause.org)).

Information from the updated 2024 ESHRE POI guideline:

[www.eshre.eu/Guidelines-and-Legal/Guidelines/Premature-ovarian-insufficiency](http://www.eshre.eu/Guidelines-and-Legal/Guidelines/Premature-ovarian-insufficiency)

© Monash University