



Orgasm does not have to happen every time you make love, but it is a nice conclusion. If you do not have a partner, or you have not been able to have an orgasm with your partner, loving yourself is a sexually satisfying option for achieving an orgasm. It is also a great way to teach your partner what you need to reach orgasm. The key to the best possible orgasm is to be honest, and open with your partner about what you like and don't like and what you need to feel great, whether it be a certain type of touch, kissing, or caressing.

## **Shed the Shame**

The 'M word' has long been surrounded with taboos. Many illnesses have been attributed to masturbation—everything from hairy palms to blindness. Infants and children touch their genitals because it is pleasurable and makes them feel good. Depending on what you were told as a child by your parents to curb this behavior, you may think that masturbation is either a healthy, normal practice or a "dirty" one. Some people believe that masturbation should be censured because it stops people from seeking out another for sexual intimacy. Others believe if we promote masturbation, people will stop seeking out dangerous

encounters that could lead to diseases like HIV, syphilis, or gonorrhea. Whatever your opinion of masturbation, let us start off by saying masturbation is not only normal, but also healthy. Women and men equally enjoy masturbation.

According to Lou Paget in her book *The Big O, Orgasms: How to Have Them, Give Them, and Keep Them Coming*, almost 70 percent of women cannot reach orgasm through penetration alone. There is nothing wrong with you if you are in this group; this is quite normal. Manual stimulation of the clitoris is required by most women. Paget also says that, for most women, the reason for no or few orgasms with a partner boil down to two issues: one, she isn't being stimulated in a way that works for her; or two, she is not mentally present. As a result, it is often easier for a woman to be orgasmic on her own.

## Self-Pleasure Steps

Put on some nice music, have a bath with your favorite aromatherapy products, light a candle, lock your bedroom door, put your lubricant on the bedside table, and relax. Don't forget to breathe. Breathing is one of the most important aspects of great orgasms.

Touch your genitals—they are a pleasure center like no other. Try stroking or massaging all the areas of your genitals to find out how it feels. Some women like to use two fingers together. They begin stroking or rubbing on the upper part of the hood of the clitoris. Apply pressure to the mons pubis, massage your nipples, and caress the inner areas of your thighs. Explore the inner third of your vagina. Contract your vaginal muscles, and release, contract, and release. Experiment with different pressures and movements. Breathe in and out in a rhythmic manner. Get in tune with how your genitals feel. Women are often disconnected from this area of their bodies. It is time to reconnect.

Fantasize. Dream up images that make you feel sexy. Remember: no negative self-talk. If all of a sudden you find you are chastising yourself for having these thoughts, remind yourself that you are a beautiful, healthy, sexy woman who deserves to have great orgasms. There are no 'dirty' thoughts.

Self-stimulation is great if you are single or simply alone because it keeps your muscles working. Pelvic floor muscles get quite a workout during orgasm. The rhythmic contractions of orgasm give the walls of your vagina a workout too. Plus, orgasm can help those who have reduced lubrication by getting the secreting glands to keep working.

Masturbation helps relieve sexual tension when you are without a partner. No partner, no worries; masturbation to the rescue. For women who have partners with erectile problems,

masturbation is a release and can take the pressure off his performance. And if you have yet to tell your partner how to satisfy you, then self-stimulation on your own is effective.

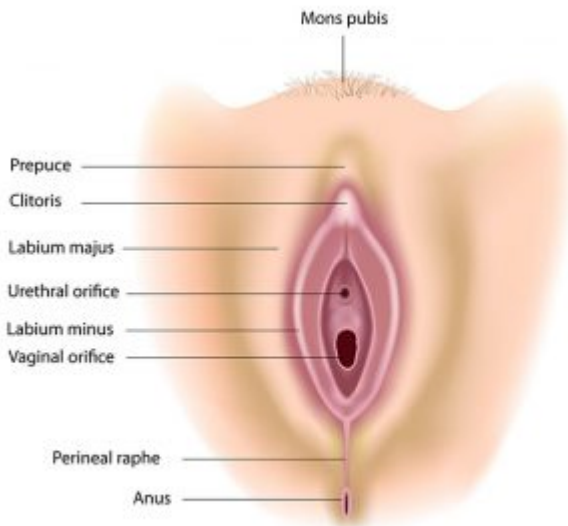
This experience is not about achieving orgasm. It is about getting to know what makes you feel great. If you reach orgasm, that's wonderful. Betty Dodson, a famous sexologist, has written an excellent book called *Sex for One*, designed to teach self-stimulation. Every woman should get this book as a graduation present to help her understand her body and feel good about her genitals. *Sex for One* is not about eliminating your partner from the equation; it is about getting to know yourself. If you are with a partner, this will only enhance your relationship and open the door to some hot lovemaking. Masturbation is fun and will put you in touch with your body and connect your body to your mind.

## **Vibrators and Self Love**

Sex toys, such as vibrators, can be a great way for women to increase their pleasure and learn what they respond to. In addition to being used alone, they can be used during intercourse or foreplay with a partner. Many women who have never had an orgasm found that they are able to achieve orgasm easier during intercourse after learning how to climax with a vibrator.

### **A Quick How-To**

If you are new to using a vibrator, start by putting it on low speed. Buy a vibrator with a range of speeds, from low to intense. Start on low and place the vibrator on the mons pubis. Move it around until you find an area that feels sensitive and responsive, and alternate speeds. Some women place the vibrator just above the clitoris or the prepuce. If you put it on your clitoris, it can be over-stimulating and then you may not be able to have an orgasm. Many women who try a vibrator for the first time are shocked that they can have an orgasm in minutes. Lubricants can be used with toys.



Make sure to follow the clean and care instructions that come with each product. New toys should be cleaned before use and after each use. Regular inspections for damage are also important. Little cracks in the material are a breeding ground for harmful bacteria.