Introduction to Menopause, Sex, and Libido

Hello, welcome back to Mastering The Menopause Transition Summit 2.0 can't forget the 2.0 I am your host Dr. Sharon Stills and it's time for another conversation.

So grab your tea, get comfy because this is girlfriend time. We're going to talk about one of my favorite topics. We're going to talk about sex and libido and what to do if you need years to be reinvigorated, if you have lost it and you're like, Where have you gone?

We're going to talk about where it's gone and what you can do to find it and bring it on home because pleasure and menopause, maybe that's like a new thing, putting those two words together.

But to me, menopause is all about self-care, self-love, loving others pleasure, and just really embracing that as you are embracing who you are as a woman and as we get older and get more comfortable in our bodies.

And so I am thrilled to have this talk with my friend and colleague and Summit co-host, herself, another member of the Dr. Talks family. She hosted the Microbes and Mental Health Summit not too long ago and has an upcoming summit about libido.

So just make a mental note of that. We're going to dove deeper and but we're going to we're going to give you the preview and the deets today. So let's talk about sex.

So my my guest is Dr. Diane Mueller, the libido doctor. So libido doctor in the house. So we are going to just do we're going to do some real talk. So welcome.

It is great to have you here. Thanks for joining us. Thanks so much for having me. I can't wait for this conversation. Like doctor libido. Okay, let's go.

And I don't know about you, but I'm sure it's similar to me. A lot of the women who come see me, who are dealing with perimenopause or going through menopause or post-menopausal, it's often, you know, on my intake forms, it's like list your five top concerns.

And I see fatigue and hair loss and loss of sex drive low libido is very frequently there. So I wanted to make sure we were having this conversation and it was included in the summit because it is definitely a topic that needs to be addressed and doesn't need to be that the end of the story, that line libido is gone and that's it.

So I mean, I guess the first thing I want to know is how did you become the libido doctor?

Why Libido Drops: Physical, Emotional, and Social Factors

Oh, man, I feel like there's so many different ways we could even go with that question. Some of the ways I think we fall into these types of topics, you know, as doctors almost like happenstance or like there was two different things I'd say like personally and professionally, like one, going through life, I'm in my mid-forties and really, you know, so it's like starting to see changes in my body when I hit 40.

But even prior to that, just personally noticing in my own health and my own say, seeking out pleasure and passion and sex that I would go through periods where in my life I would be either really low sex drive, normal sex drive, or even high sex drive.

So I've had a personal curiosity for decades really, about what has led to that and why. There are some times where it seems like the gas is really on and the brakes are really on at other times and then professionally.

You know, what's so interesting we were talking about this a little off line is more treating other diseases like it's very common. You know, people come in even like way before perimenopause and they're like and they're in their twenties or they're in their thirties even.

And like sometimes low libido starts then. Right. And so it was very common in my, in sex forms, it's like been on my intake form for, you know, since the beginning of is your sex drive.

And I would very, very frequently, almost all the time see that it was low. And so even though initially I did not start in my career as the libido doctor, one of the things that was really happening was I was finding that as I was getting to the root cause of other things, you know, thyroid and stress and toxins and gut problems and infections and all these other things, all of a sudden, relationships are better and they're coming in and they're telling me my sex drives back.

I gave I'm having sex again. And so it almost was a little bit happenstance all from I just naturally starting to see the things I was doing was shifting that for people combined with my own innate curiosity for pleasure.

MM Yeah. And that is a good point. If you're struggling with infections and other issues and hormonal depletion and stress, sometimes the sex drive is just gone because your body's busy just trying to get you through the day and just stay alive and the body innately chooses to stay alive rather than to have pleasure.

And so we want to get the playing field leveled and get you feeling good so you can have pleasure. And I think it is important to think about I know I always ask my patients, is this low libido or something that's new or something that you just finally feel comfortable enough to even address?

And did you have a libido when you were younger? Because often we have hormonal problems and nowadays it's like earlier and earlier and earlier. And so it's good to know.

So you could be in menopause and your libido. Once you do the right things can be stronger and larger and than ever before than even in your twenties.

So like change that story about I have always had a low libido and that's that's who I am. And so what are the things you find other than what you just lifted listed off in this age?

What do you see contributing to low libido and a little more detail? Yeah. So there's definitely physical stuff like we're talking about, so we can say there's physical, there's psychosocial, there's emotional, there's interrelation.

Also, there's so many different psych healers we get call them in relationship to libido issues so we can go through them a little bit one by one from the, from the physical standpoint, a lot of what I mentioned, right?

So we can have, say, infections and toxins and we see, for example, certain toxins are actually zero estrogens or types of estrogens that prevent our body from really making and synthesize and creating our own estrogens and metabolizing breaking down recycling our own estrogens correctly.

So there's things like toxins that can cause huge problems. So total body burden as far as how many toxins in your body, thyroid, there is research really linking low thyroid to things like low testosterone levels or elevations in sex hormone binding globulin.

We have elevations in sex hormone binding globulin. Your hormones, you can make your hormones, but your cells actually are not using they're not available to your cells.

Right. So we can have situations like thyroid dysfunction. Obviously, all of our sex hormones are playing a role here. But but we can say other infections so we can go on and on, you know, in more detail.

That's helpful from the physical standpoint, but just a touch upon these other pillars as well. Another huge thing that I feel is talked about but not talked about enough really is this concept of emotional safety.

And that's like like as women, like the act of having sex is like it's kind of it's very vulnerable that kind of vulnerable, like it's actually real vulnerable, right?

So we're actually in one of the most, say, vulnerable positions when we are engaging sexually as women. And because of that, if there's little tiny micro-aggressions or micro traumas or things that are happening with your relationship that you're like, it's not that big a deal.

I'm just going to sweep this under the rug versus like figuring out and learning how to have more conscious communication. All of these types of things can lead to these almost like these micro microaggressions that are just sometimes major, but sometimes just a simple communication could clear it up, and it can lead to this feeling of not feeling safe.

And when we leave, when we don't feel safe, one cortisol tends to elevate, which tends to for most people, not do positive things for their sex drive. There are exceptions to that.

But the other thing is like it's really just from a think about evolutionary perspective, feeling unsafe safe doesn't make us as humans want to put ourselves into a vulnerable, vulnerable position like we have to when we are engaging intimately.

So, you know, that's a huge thing. Like where are you with safety in your partnerships? Where are you with safety in your life? And then another huge killer that I think is important to name is this almost a societal pillar where it's really kind of taboo.

Like, I love that we can talk about sex on a summit and that I'm doing a libido summit and that you're hosting this on your summit, this particular talk, because it's I think it's a really important thing that it's it's been very taboo.

And like, if you look at the history of women, we're talking about sex. You know, it wasn't more than like a couple of centuries ago, women were being labeled with hysteria if they had over too many emotions and they would get a diagnosis of being like hysteria, that would be their diagnosis.

They would go to their doctor and their doctor would basically perform a finger manipulation technique, essentially to give them an orgasm and cure the hysteria.

And that's like where we're coming from as women from socially being able to talk about this. And so I think a lot of it too is just like normalizing these conversations of what is normal, what is a healthy libido, what is normal for you, what is normal for a female?

Because that's going to be different than males. So that's another huge component is really just not being comfortable with these kind of conversations that we're really working to break down.

Yeah, I think that's a really important point and I a couple of things that I'm thinking about is with sex for women, we like you talked about safety and we need to be connected before we're going to let you inside with that.

And for men, the way they connect is sex. And so and so it's very it's very different. And, you know, there's always exceptions to to the generalities, but it is really important to I that's the conversation.

If you're not having sex or you're not interested in having sex, where are you at in your relationship? And are you are you angry? Are you pissed off?

Are you, you know, holding things inside? That's super important. And then the other piece is for men like men who are into sex in their studies and and women who are into sex, they're sluts.

And it's such an unfair like I love sex. It is okay to love sex. It is our it is our birthright to experience pleasure.

Rebuilding Desire Through Body Image and Embodiment

And we're one of the only species who doesn't just have intercourse to procreate. We have it for the pleasure and there's so much pleasure in it. And so as you're listening to this, it's good to just kind of start being aware what was I taught as a child?

What was the environment around sex, what are my beliefs? So there could be a lot of like back walking and kind of unwinding some things and that's totally fine.

This is this is your menopausal transition. This is your time to pause. This is your time to kind of collect and gather and that you can go into this.

I call it the sacred second act, that you can go into this next step and rocket and discover pleasure that maybe you've never experienced or never allowed yourself to experience before.

So I think it is definitely always I mean, all of health, right, is always like the mind and the body and the social and the emotional and the physical.

And there's no difference when we're talking about libido. So what what are so if someone comes in and sees you and they have low libido, what are some of the things that you like to teach them or have them do to starting increasing their libido?

Are there any golden nuggets that the listeners could kind of take from our talk right now? Yeah. I mean, first of all, I think one of the biggest initial things is starting to get more comfortable with how you feel about your body.

It's really very interesting the research that have shown that negative body image or about the physical body or negative genitalia image, just about like what your vulva, you know, even looks like externally, right?

So those types of feelings are really related to lower libido, right? And so, so from a mental standpoint, like, yes, let's do tests, let's get to the physical root causes.

But while we're doing that, we can begin to work on some of the more mental things. And the cool thing about this work on the mental way we relate to body image, the mental way we relate to our vulvas or our entire genital system, really the way we relate to all of this is so connected to becoming more confident in everything else in life, right?

So these things are very interconnected oftentimes and from a standpoint of being related to your own body image and having a more positive body image.

One of the things that really broke down the concept of what, say, beauty is, was when I started doing X Factor type of classes. So some of you guys might know Sheila Kelly's work.

She does a secret fitness program called X Factor, which is really about sensual types of dance that are it's just kind of exclusive to women that go to these dance classes.

And it's really about feeling into your own sexuality, dancing from that place and witnessing each other and really being visualized by and by other women in the room that are giving you positive feedback about what they're seeing.

That is beautiful about the way you move. Right. And it was very interesting the first times I started going to these classes because what I actually started realizing is what made a woman say, look, extra beautiful and extra sexy had nothing to do with anything actually physical appearance.

It was all about how much she was actually dropped into her own body and into her own movements. And that was a huge light bulb and seeing that. So some of the initial things we can do to start developing better body image is to actually drop in to feeling inside our body more.

And that's, you know, dance is a wonderful way of doing it. There's lots of other ways, you know, sometimes yoga, sometimes other types of slow types of moving arts can do this as well, but really beginning to drop into how you actually feel.

And then from the general perspective and you know what your whatever we're going to call this area, right? So whether we're going to call it your pussy, your yoni, there's a lot of great words out there we can use to describe this area.

But whatever we're going to describe this area as really dropping into actually visualizing this part of yourself because there's been so much like cultural stuff even around like crazy stuff around genital mutilation that's still happening today of women's parts have to look a certain way.

And so another exercise you can do is actually beginning to examine yourself and just saying like, wow, I'm beautiful here. I'm beautiful all over the place.

Because the more we can understand that all of us, just like we have different looking faces, we have different looking for all of us. And all of it is beautiful and all of its unique and all of it's perfect.

And so the more we can actually start telling ourselves like, Oh, this part of my body is perfect the way it is, that level of actually changing our body image and changing our genitalia image has been shown to draw equally impact our sex drive.

So while we're doing all the root cause testing and getting to the thyroid in the gut and the toxins and all the things I mentioned, there's things like that that we can start right away to become more embodied and to really become more into that sense of like, Oh my, my pleasure.

Actually is coming from within. Mm. I think that movement and I, my brand is always red hot, sexy menopause and red is for reinventing your health, exploring your spirit.

So there's your body and your mind components and discovering your sexy. And I always talk about how what's sexy is to me might not be what sexy is to you.

And it's so much more than big boobs and red lips, although I like my red lips. Meeting. But but in a nice but or whatever it is it's really especially at this point in life, it's really about how you move, how you think, how you create, how you communicate, how you share your passions.

Being sexy is so much more than just the external and being comfortable in your body. And that's a lot of times I find patients don't have a sex drive because they don't like their physical body and they feel too flabby.

They feel their stomach's too big. And, you know, there's there's two sides to that, right? Like a are you overweight? And is that causing a health issue?

And do we need to tone things up a little? And also, are you being super hard on yourself? And is it just, you know, not allowing yourself to to experience pleasure, to to be loved?

And even I know, like you're talking about looking at your vulva. And I think there's so many women like if you're listening and if you've never seen your vulva, that's very common.

I mean, I have I have the guy in table in the office and the mirror and it's like you want to say hello. And so the women are like, Oh, I'd really I would never because, you know, it's kind of it's not just something like we look at like our hands all the time and and even from I'm so conscious about it with I was with my boys and now even with my granddaughters that like when babies just naturally touch themselves and how, how were you told, like, don't touch yourself there and then so it starts the stigma, sometimes even pre-verbal and certainly pre before understanding.

So what are your thoughts on that? My thoughts are that's like a huge part of like the core of the root problem. And there's a couple of things to say there, like why?

And just to also play off of what you're saying around like, okay, well, if you're carrying excess weight that didn't want to maybe, you know, figure out some of what's going on there.

Like I do want to make sure to touch on that for sure because there is the components like a both and right like we are beautiful exactly how we are. We can completely be embodied and completely moved from a place of pleasure and sensuality and sexuality without literally changing a thing.

And since libido is a topic, we see that, for example, certain things like carrying excess weight, if it's linked to blood sugar elevations, whether it's like just high blood sugar or true diabetes, we actually see links with that, especially through the impact on the vasculature, the blood vessels that that leads to lower blood flow of the erectile tissue in not just males, but also in females.

Right. So we do want to consider it's like a both ends, right?

Sensuality, Foreplay, and Pornography

So I just want to touch on, you know, and kind of emphasize that point that you made because I think that's really important, like being completely, completely embodied in whatever body you have, like completely feeling into your sensuality.

And if there's physical things that are like impacting your health and wellbeing and your sensuality also working on those and then yeah, so your point of what happens, you know, in childhood, I think this is a huge thing.

I think one of our biggest, the biggest challenges and that's why I even brought up this like horrible thing that's happening around genital mutilation, because vulvas are supposed to look a certain way, like there's this big cultural thing of, like you said, like down there, don't touch yourself and these sorts of things and IT programs into the subconscious that it's not safe, that it's not okay.

And like you mentioned earlier, like the slut shaming and all of that, and I actually wrote a blog on this the other day around like, okay, so in, you know, at some points in life, you know, men are more promiscuous.

It's like high fives, women are slut shamed. And then at another point of life, if you know of men wind up not being partnered, they're typically revered as bachelors and women.

We get the term spinster or old maid. So it's like it's so many parts of our lives. We're seeing that, you know, from childhood all the way up to, you know, old age.

We're seeing still this cultural thing of it's not okay to be sexual. And some of that I think we're really breaking down, you know, like but I do think there's still this thread in the subconscious and probably in a lot of our subconscious as that really goes back to childhood.

Like you're talking about. So yeah, it's important to just to me it's just neutral. You're touching yourself there, you're touching your nose. It's it's just and then it takes the charge off of it.

And so when you we, we develop our subconscious beliefs from birth or maybe pre-birth, probably till the age of five, six, seven. I think that's really where we develop and decide the world is a happy place or, you know, a comfortable place or a scary place or what it is.

And so it is important to be thinking about that, whether it's for your children or nieces and nephews or grandchildren or teaching that to your children who have children.

So we can start to shift the belief processes. So and also being comfortable like you just like move through at the

word pussy. And I'm like, I wonder how many listeners did how many of you were like, oh, they.

And so it is really finding what works for you. And Yoni is a beautiful Sanskrit sacred word. And Yoni steaming is a beautiful thing to do, and it could just be your vagina or you have a JJ or I mean, there's, it's just what's comfortable for you, but it's, it's being able to name it, like to say vagina and like, it's just it's your vagina.

It's your abdomen, it's your lungs, it's your bones, it's your vagina. It's one of our body parts. It's a beautiful body part. Women we have we have creation.

We our vagina leads to our to our womb in creation and creating another human. And whether you birthed a human or not, it's just that magical place where you can be birthing ideas and projects and plan words and creativity and connection to yourself.

So I'd love to ask you, I think it's really important to differentiate between what is sensual, arty and what is sexuality. Mm mm. Yeah. I mean, I think of sensuality in many ways of like, as of the senses, right?

So sensuality and sexuality can be connected, but sensuality, for example, is like, Oh, how does something feel on my skin? How does something smell? And so it kind of brings up the information or the discussion also of foreplay, because I feel like sensual ability and tuning into our sensual body, right?

Tuning into when I touch my face, how does that feel? Or if I wear something that's lacy, like I'm wearing now versus something that's Velvets, right?

That can tune into getting me into my senses. And the more oftentimes we're tuned into our sensual body, oftentimes that can help us feel into more of our sexuality.

Right? So it's like since sensuality in many ways I look at is also like being present in the moment. Like I'm so present to the way I move, to the way my skin feels, to the what sounds I hear to that music, right?

All of the senses. And the more we drop into the present with our sensuality, the more we can actually access more of our sexuality because it's really common, you know, in a intimate act as women, it's really calm.

And I would love if we were all live, I would all make you put up your hands right now to ask how many of you guys have ever been involved intimately live with a partner, and the next thing you know, your mind is doing the grocery list like anybody ever had that happened.

Like and my guess is a lot of you guys are putting up your hands and some of that is because the nature of how the female brain works, evolutionary wise, is largely a very diverse, a very diffuse awareness and a great woman.

Allison Armstrong was amazing books and Amazing Courses was the one that first made me realize that I like oriented me to talking about this way and the way that she kind of helped me frame this is women with our diffuse awareness.

We are really we're like constantly looking like imagine like a field evolutionary wise and we're constantly searching for like, okay, is there an intruder over there?

And I'm hunting for the berries, but the berries over there in springtime are deadly and the berries over there are good. And where's my kids? Right. So is this diffuse awareness that gets connected to us evolutionary wise?

And there is a purpose and it's not bad. It's it's good and it's beautiful. It also is what it is. So it's very actually normal as women to be involved in any sort of intimate act.

And all of a sudden the mind wanders right, but also part of the pleasure and part of experiencing orgasm and part of really that sexuality is in if it wanders almost being like, Oh, wait, and I'm right here and this is the moment and this is what it actually feels to be in this intimate moment with my partner feeling all the sensations, right?

And so sensuality. And to bring us back to this topic. Right, sensuality in many ways, I feel like is a way of connecting to the senses, to practice presence, which in turn we take into more the sexuality component of it, the more sexual types of acts.

And then because we've been practiced in our sensuality, in our presence, we can more deeply feel what is happening in those moments. And the moment we drop into what we're feeling usually is the moment we're actually enjoying it deeper.

We are reaching orgasm. We're feeling that intense level of love and connection and emotional Yemenis that we get to feel with a partner. And then the other thing I would add about sensuality that I think is really important is foreplay, like I mentioned.

So a lot of times with foreplay, it's so easy to be like, oh, these are this is like the acts that we do before we do the big act, right? Like that's oftentimes how foreplay is thought about.

But foreplay and some of the research on foreplay is showing that like the happiest couples, the most like, say, sexually satisfied, deeply connected couples actually look at foreplay different.

They look at foreplay as basically what happens between the moment, say, the big ag ends and and it begins again. So it's the way that we brush our partners arm in the kitchen.

It's the cute little flirtatious text we send on the phone. Right. All these little things that and those things I feel like are connected to the senses.

Like what we say to each other, what we feel, how we touch each other as we're, you know, the kids are in the room and we're just brushing our partners arm because we don't want the kids to see any of this like all of those kind of things.

That to me is more the sensuality. Mm. Yeah. And I think, I mean, foreplay is so enjoyable. It's taking the, the act of penetration in orgasm as being the goal to being a full body, expressing and sort of connecting on every level energetically, physically, emotionally and not just rushing to it.

And yeah. And yes, foreplay can be happening. 24 seven Why not? And so I was just shutting down a few questions, so I would love to know, like, what are your views on pornography?

Orgasm, Masturbation, and Health Benefits

Mm hmm. I think, you know, there's it's very tricky because I think from a pornography standpoint, from a standpoint, as far as going back to the body image or the genitalia image, one of the problems with pornography from that standpoint is like, oh, every woman body genitals, everything looks mostly very similar, right?

So I think one of the problems with pornography is that it creates it creates a couple of different things. One, it creates this body image issue, this genitalia image issue of is it supposed to look this way and feel this way and, you know, or look?

And I said, look this way, body, look this way, genitals, but also feeling, right? So I kind of misspoke there, but that was where I was going next anyways.

And so the idea with that too is it kind of makes it seem for women like, oh, you just do this thing for like 5 minutes and all of a sudden you're supposed to have this like rocket style orgasm and that's what it looks like.

And so it creates a very false image as well as far as like how we reach orgasm, there's so many women that have never reached orgasm or have a hard time reaching orgasm, it's also very normal and a lot of that is just based upon your anatomy and how close your clitoris is actually to the opening of your vagina like your vaginal canal.

So a lot of that is going to make a difference as far as whether or not you are actually able to orgasm easily. And yet in porn it's like, oh, we just do this.

Like there's one or two things and we get penetrated and all of a sudden it's like rocket ships, right? So I think those are problems. I think there can be benefits from and I think there are there are there are types of porn companies that are doing very conscious porn.

And that's like a term that actually can be looked at. So there's definitely ways that it's like it can be used together as a way of turning you on. It can be use a way as like finding other things that you would never thought about from a novelty position or a novelty situation to bring in to your to the bedroom.

So I think it's less of a conversation about like good versus bad, but what type it is and what it is doing for you and your relationship. Yeah, I love that. Yeah.

Just and anything can be taken to an extreme of addiction or, you know, not being serving you. And so I love that it's it's not black and white and I love conscious porn.

And yeah, I don't know, sounds like an oxymoron, like conscious porn, but it's really it's a wonderful movement. So speaking of orgasms, medical benefits, I think because there are numerous medical benefits of orgasm, it just doesn't it's not only just to feel good.

So if you could speak to that. Yes, yes. Yes. And I think this is a really important topic, too, for any of you ladies that are listening. You're like, because this can happen.

One of the things that can happen at menopause, especially if you have had a low libido, low sex drive for a while, one of the things that can happen sometimes is like whenever I'm in menopause, I'm just not that interested anymore.

And it's very easy and very normal. So like almost just kind of write it off as like, you know, this is just something that I will do if my partner really wants me to.

But in general, I'm good, right? I hear that conversation a lot. And so I hope is that that kind of statement is resonating with you. You really take into heart what I'm about to talk about now, which is, like you said, the health benefits from orgasm, the health benefits from sexual expression.

So it really brings us to oxytocin. And oxytocin is this amazing hormone. It's like known as the pleasure hormone connection hormone or the cuddle hormone or the love hormone.

And we do release it. When we cuddle, we release pet dogs, we release it when we laugh, but we really sit a real high when we orgasm like real high amounts.

And it has so many health benefits, it actually helps us to regulate cortisol, our stress hormone. And there's so much talk about cortisol as stress and belly fat.

And you name the link between high cortisol on high blood sugar. So all of these things get regulated blood sugar and cortisol are sex hormones. We see benefits with depression, we see benefits with sleep.

We see benefits with just general emotional regulation, anxiety. So, so many different things we see from hormonal health to sleep, health to energy to stress.

And then the other thing that is also amazing really is that connection, right? Really, is that that moment where it's like that's why, you know, make up sex has in part this like this great reputation.

There's a lot of reasons why it has a great reputation, but one of them is that, you know, you're fighting, you have this whatever with your partner and then all of a sudden through oxytocin especially, it's like it creates that love

bond back again that can really help to heal that and say, oh, right.

Like maybe we still have stuff we need to talk about, but this is us, this is us. This is us in love. This is us in connection, this is us and partnership.

And because that can happen and because the lowering of the cortisol and stress hormones and all of that, that happens as well. It really can help to repair relationships because it can help bring you to a point where you can talk things from a less you know, less stress induced place and more from a connection and happy hormone kind of place as well.

And it's if you're dating is one of the reasons why you shouldn't have sex right away, because it could it could bond you to someone who may not be a good match for you, but puts you in that.

Oh, yes. And that's exactly right. Kind of get to know someone first. And unless you just know you want to go have a good time, it's all good. But it's just something to think about because I think a lot of people get bonded through sex and they haven't taken the time to really see do our values and our priorities and our personalities do.

Do those all meld? So and yeah, I mean one of my favorite sleeping pill prescriptions is to have an orgasm. Yes, they agree. Hopefully, whether you have a partner or the vibrator is right on the nightstand.

And it is a wonderful way without these having to take Ambien or something to help you drift off into sleep. And orgasms also prevent urinary tract infections.

They balance blood sugar. They are releasing DHEA. There's so many medical benefits which and plus, they, you know, they feel good and who doesn't want some oxytocin?

And I run oxytocin levels and all my patients who are coming in for hormonal balance and it tends to typically be low baselines are always love and you can take supplemental oxytocin.

We do it through nasal sprays. The best way to absorb it, making sure your estrogen is optimized will often bring it up and doing the things like having an oxytocin filled life with a bubble bath and grapes and sunshine and dogs and babies and hugging and cuddling.

And all of these things are good medicine for for the for the soul and for the the libido. And so have a few more questions as we're winding down masturbation.

I'd love for you to speak to to that. Yeah. Yeah. That's a topic that is extra on my brain right now because as we're filming this in May, it's the masturbation month.

Male So we've been talking a lot about masturbation in this month and it's a really important topic I think too, because there's a lot as another area where there's a lot of taboo, right?

There's a lot of taboo around this topic for religious reasons or dogma or culture, whatever it is. But this is an amazing tool, you guys. This is an amazing tool for so many reasons.

And What we're actually seeing is a few different things. One, just by learning your own anatomy and your own turn ons and turn off like there is, there is depending upon the study, the studies that are actually looking at erogenous zones.

Some studies will define up to five different erogenous zones in the female anatomy. Right? Five. And so this goes so a notice and some of like, you know, to actually begin to know and to learn your body and to say, oh, this area of my vulva, this area of my vagina, this area of my pussy is like very sometimes it can be numb.

Sometimes it can be extra sensitive. Sometimes you'll like an area and like that area has more sensation than another area. So you really begin to learn about your own unique anatomy because we are all so different.

And then taking that into a, you know, into the bedroom with a partner, it's a lot easier then to be like, Oh, you know, hey, can we shift into this position?

Or we can try this and it becomes a thing that you can bring it into partner play because you actually understand your own body. Another huge benefit about masturbation is really helping with vaginal tone.

So we see, for example, that as we age and we go into Perry and into menopause, one of the things that creates pain with sex is a lack of elasticity of our muscles.

So the muscles almost become they become like rigid and they don't move in the same sort of way. And we actually see that sex and masturbation really help to repair that.

So, yes, have sex, have more sex. But one of the things that we can do in addition to that is we can actually take control because actually see, when we are actually doing exercises like with masturbation, masturbation, we can actually then improve the elasticity of our tissue.

So that can help from a just a tissue, an anti aging perspective. It even can help with your pelvic floor muscles and keep your pelvis lower muscles tone.

So there's really a lot of health benefits that can come from it as well as like I said, like just understanding your own anatomy. And another thing I will add here is the concept of turning ourselves on. It's so important because so frequently it's we we put this on our partners, right?

And we put this on our partners around like turn on and pleasure is this external thing. But if we can begin to actually turn our selves on and masturbation is a turn on, right?

So we begin to turn ourselves on. We actually can find that sometimes in our partners this is quite common that then, you know, partners will all of a sudden become more like they'll be drawn to you more sexually.

They'll, they'll start coming on to you because you're so full of your own vitality. Your hormones are regulated, you're just radiating, right. That can all happen for masturbation and then that can trickle down in that own way to that that more alluring type of reaction that we want from our partners.

So lot of good benefits we're learning from like both men and women. It's actually surprising when I went into research on masturbation, it's actually surprising from like a metal.

Like if we're just truly looking medicine, how many research studies are like, this is good for health, this is good for health and yet has been so taboo.

So yes, masturbate please. So it is we talk about you have to love yourself first. Yes, that's secret. And so it's the same process of thought that you have to know how to pleasure yourself and find what feels good first.

And then you share that with another. It's hard to expect that someone else can do that for you if you haven't taken the time to do it yourself. So tips like any favorite herbs, food activities just to to turn on the love light.

But yeah, yeah. I mean my, I'd say the number one tip is explore your own pleasure. You know, it's like there are some herbs mochas, one of them pine bark is one of them.

There are some that have been shown to improve libido. There's other things that are talked about that like red clover is one of them that doesn't really show up like doesn't really isn't really supported in the studies seen.

But you can experiment with herbs like maca and pine bark. DHEA topically on the vulva is amazing, amazing, amazing, amazing for so many different things.

Can help with dryness, can help with atrophy of the vaginal tissue. Just frankly feels good though really begin to

figure out for the uniqueness of you.

You know one of the things one of the exercises I give people is like have a pleasurable every day, one goal, you know, one pleasurable. And maybe that's masturbation and maybe it's as simple as taking a bath.

Maybe it's I'm going to sit and I'm going to drink this cup of tea, but I'm actually going to take a moment to savor every sip and every flavor, right?

Like something that is tuning you into your sensual body and then be open to exploring the open to making mistakes. And the other big thing I would I would mention is I think it's really important to normalize these topics, right.

Because this is taboo. And we actually see studies that show that when we talk about sex, we actually improve our libido. We it actually is improved just by talking about it.

So, you know, talk about it with your partner if you can.

Practical Ways to Reignite Pleasure

If not, sign a girlfriend, grab tea, grab wine, have a juicy conversation and just start normalizing these conversations. Because the more they become normal, the more you'll also find yourself tuning into your own sexuality and your own sex, like sexuality and sensuality, because it becomes so much less taboo.

I'm thinking, if I want a Toastmasters award at my very first visit when I went to a meeting a number of years ago because I told the story of when I got caught masturbating by my apartment.

This is during natural Catholic medical school many years ago, but I got caught. I forgot the memo that said they were coming in to change the masking filters and classes.

Boring. And I lived next door and all of a sudden I was on my bed doing my thing and I looked up and the big super, the maintenance guy and the apartment manager was a woman, were standing there and it scared the heck out.

Like, I'll just scare me because I forgot there were these people in my house. And what was interesting was the maid. We had a good laugh about it because the maintenance guy and all his friends, you know, I was a favorite around there when I would go out, all my classmates would have lots of fun things to say to me.

But the the sad thing was the apartment manager woman she turned so red and she got so embarrassed and I wasn't embarrassed. I was like, You're in my house.

Once I got over the shock of There are strangers in my apartment that belong here, I would have been just as shocked if I was sitting there reading a book, but she was so embarrassed she couldn't look me in the eye.

I'd go bring in my red checks because this was way before, like paying on Zelle. And and she it just made me sad that it affected her much. And again, it goes to speak to, you know, the maintenance guy was like, Hey, Sharon.

Yeah, she was mortified. And I was we thought it was hysterical. So it it really we we have a long way to come and we are making strides. And it's conversations like this and really just, you know, seeing were you offended during this conversation other areas.

And I would as we finish up, I just would like to say that a lot of us listening, a lot of you listening may have a history of sexual abuse. And that is not something that a summit interview can really do.

Justice to. But if if that's something that is part of your story, I highly encourage you to find the right therapist to do somatic body work, to do trauma release, to really work through that, because that can be an underlying issue in

your low libido.

And, and you deserve to have that worked out and healed no matter what age you are or when it happened. And so I don't want you to think we're not addressing that.

I want to nod to that and know that that is that is a long journey and one that needs to be taken with professional help. And so I didn't want to not bring that up in the conversation and that yeah, just to wrap up your libido is a sign of health or lack of health or disc connection and your emotions.

And I know I see with my vast work with hormone replacement, sometimes estrogen does the job, sometimes testosterone does the job. Sometimes testosterone or estrogen don't do the job.

Sometimes it's thyroid, sometimes it's peptide, sometimes it's. So I think we think, Oh, I'm just going to take a little testosterone and sometimes that's it and sometimes it's not.

And it's just like how Dr. Dianne said at the beginning, there's there's multiple pillars and all of health, no matter what it is you're seeking relief from all of health has multiple pillars that you have to and that's why it's individualized to you.

So thank you for for being here and having this very important conversation. I think there's a lot of places from which those of you listening could could springboard and explore more on your own, whether it's pleasure practices or conscious porn, or finding a therapist or learning communication skills or getting your hormones balanced or all of the above.

And so thank you for bringing so many important things to our to our attention. Yeah, thank you for having me. Dr. Stills, really appreciate you. It's been a great conversation.

So and for those who would like to know where to find you, do they just Google libido? Doctor Yeah, you can find me at mylibidodoc.com. And then yeah, there's some free things on there.

There's some downloadable things for you guys as far as additional information and that sort of thing. So definitely check that out. But yeah, mylibidodoc.com is where you find me.

mylibidodoc.com. Well, thank you for being here and thank you for, you know, moving this conversation forward. And so you ladies let me know, let me know what you would Schacht you where you want to do your work from here.

But this is this is an important topic. And you deserve pleasure and passion and orgasms and oxytocin and all the things. So thanks being here and thanks for joining us for the meaningful conversation.

And we'll be back with another conversation. So stay tuned. Hi, everybody.