

At what age does male and female sexual desire peak?

Sexual desire can be understood as the experience of sexual thoughts, fantasies, and the motivation to engage in sexual activity. Given the positive link between sexual desire and general well-being, it is important to understand the factors that predict sexual desire across the life course. Several studies suggest that, on average, sexual desire is negatively associated with age.

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Despite these common assumptions on gender-/sex-specific age effects on sexual desire—that women reach their peak of sexual desire later than men do—corresponding scientific evidence is lacking.

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Using a large online sample, covering a broad age range, we examined effects of age, gender/sex, sexual orientation, relationship status, and self-rated masculinity, attractiveness, and health on sexual desire. Our findings add to the literature on sexual desire in three important ways: First, trend analyses revealed nonlinear associations between age and sexual desire for both men and women, while differences across genders/sexes and sexual desire facets became apparent. Second, average sexual desire was higher among men.

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Contrary to our prediction and other studies on sexual desire, we did not find a general (linear) negative association between age and sexual desire when examined across men and women. Instead, results are consistent with the studies that found the most pronounced declines of sexual desire starting at higher age (i.e., around age 60).

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here**](#)