

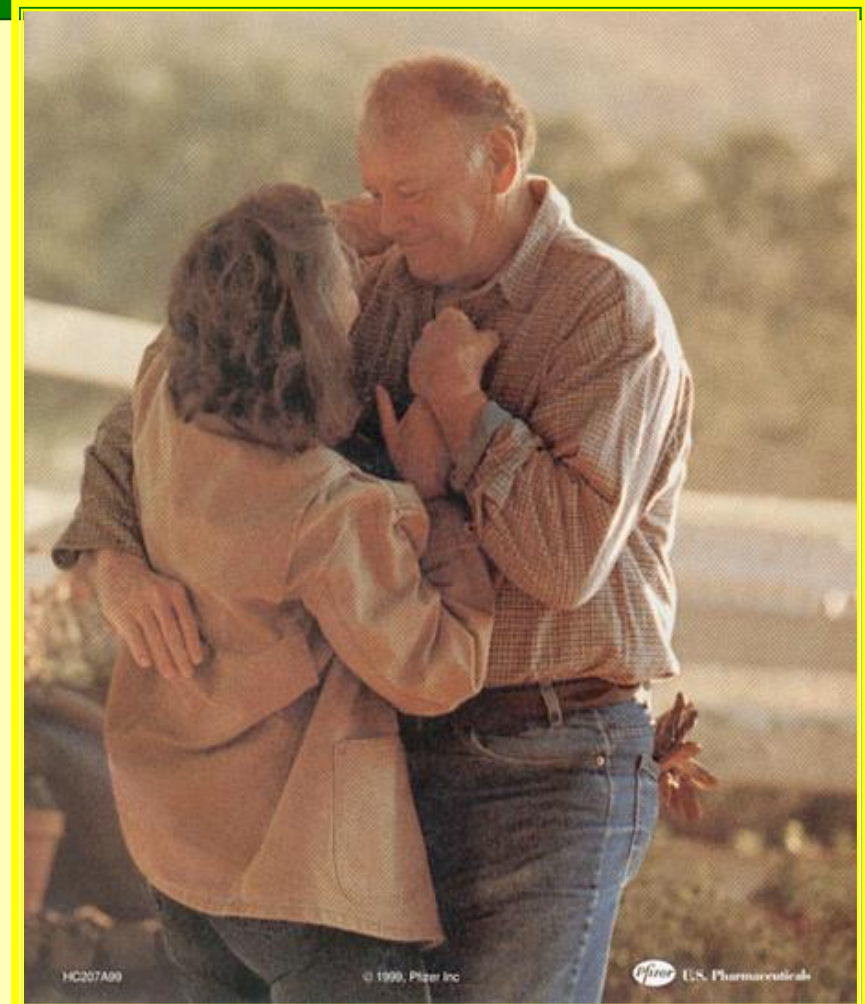
מין בגיל: מיניות בגיל השלישי

ד"ר יצחק (צחי)

בן-ציון

המרפאה לטיפול
בהפרעות בתפקוד
מיני וזוגי

מרכז רפואי סורוקה
לנגב



Sex and Aging

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“You don’t look anything like the long haired, skinny kid I married 25 years ago. I need a DNA sample to make sure it’s still you.”

Geriatric Sexuality

Older people were
young once too!

A Timeline of Your Life

- I. College Years
- II. Your 20s after college
- III. Your 30s
- IV. Your 40s
- V. Your 50s
- VI. Your 60s
- VII. Your 70s & beyond

Attitude Barriers toward Sex among the Elderly

☞ Religious Views

- Sex is for reproduction

☞ Adult Children's Resistance

- “You thwarted my sex life, now its my turn!”
- “What about mom's silverware?”

☞ Changing Roles

- “Real men have erections.”

The writer's view...

- “Forty years of romance makes a woman look like a ruin, 40 years of marriage makes a woman look like a public building.”

Oscar Wilde

- “These people are just happy to be alive.”

Anon

The writer's view

- “Wives are young men’s mistresses, companions for middle age and old men’s nurses.” *Francis Bacon*
- “Sexuality in the elderly is a ‘dark continent’ that most people, including physicians, prefer not to think about.” *J. LoPiccolo*

What is sexuality?

- “too often sexuality is equated with the ability to have or the frequency of intercourse”
- “sexuality encompasses self, interactions with others, and many levels of expression and affection”

Beliefs about sex & aging

- Current elderly were ‘Victorians’ when young
- sexual desire goes with age
- older women who enjoy sex were ‘nymphomaniacs’ when younger
- the ‘dirty old man’
- elderly are not “desirable, desirous, capable”

More mythology & viewpoints...

- Physiological changes = sexual dysfunction
- “cute”, “disgusting”, “troublesome”
- physical illness obviates sex & sexuality
- Viagra usually leads to divorces!

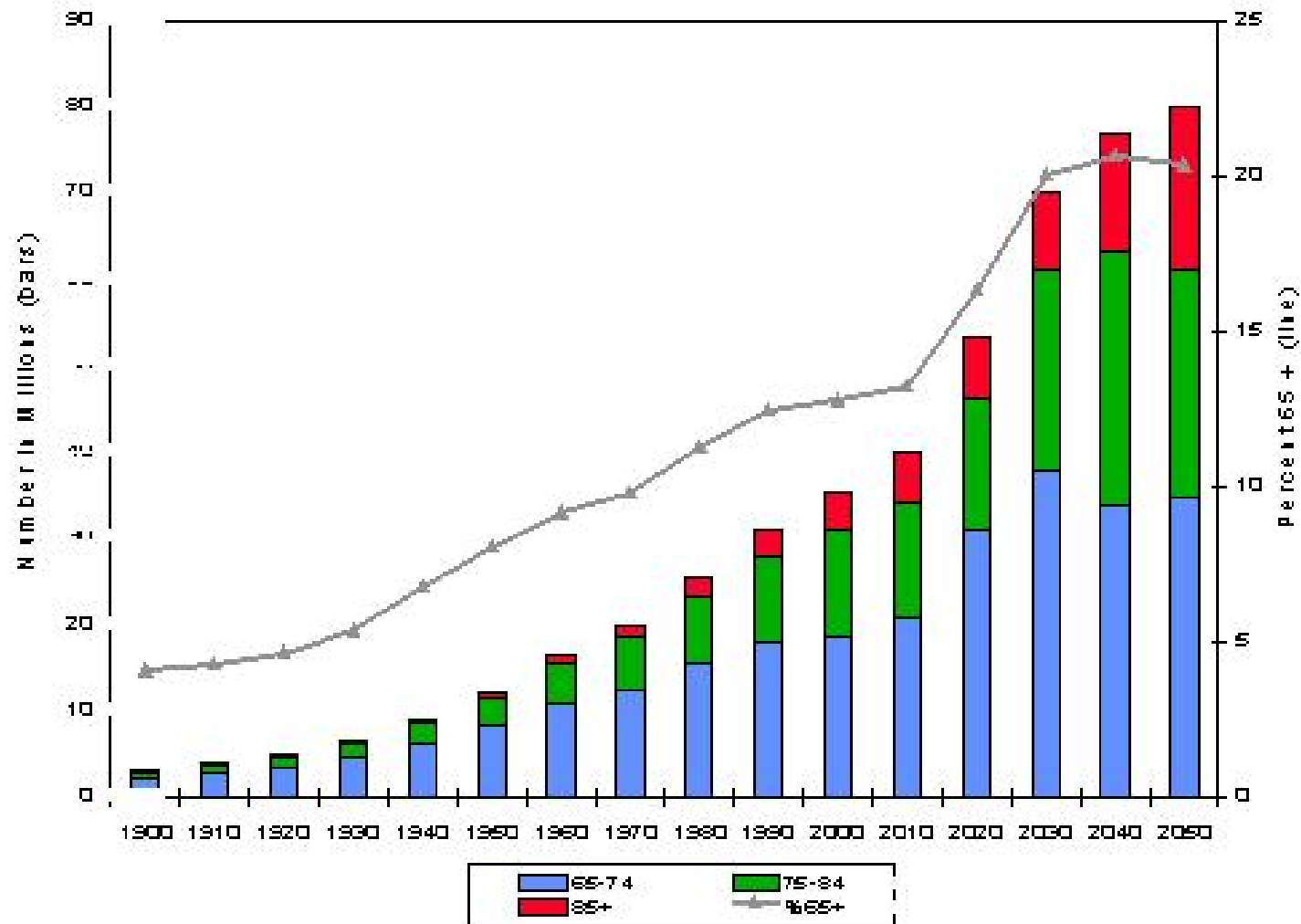
How do older people view sexuality?

- “I was told nothing until my wedding night and my husband explained it.. For two solid weeks I was in a state of shock.”
- despite initial naivete women describe good early attitudes towards sex
- minimal change in attitude with aging

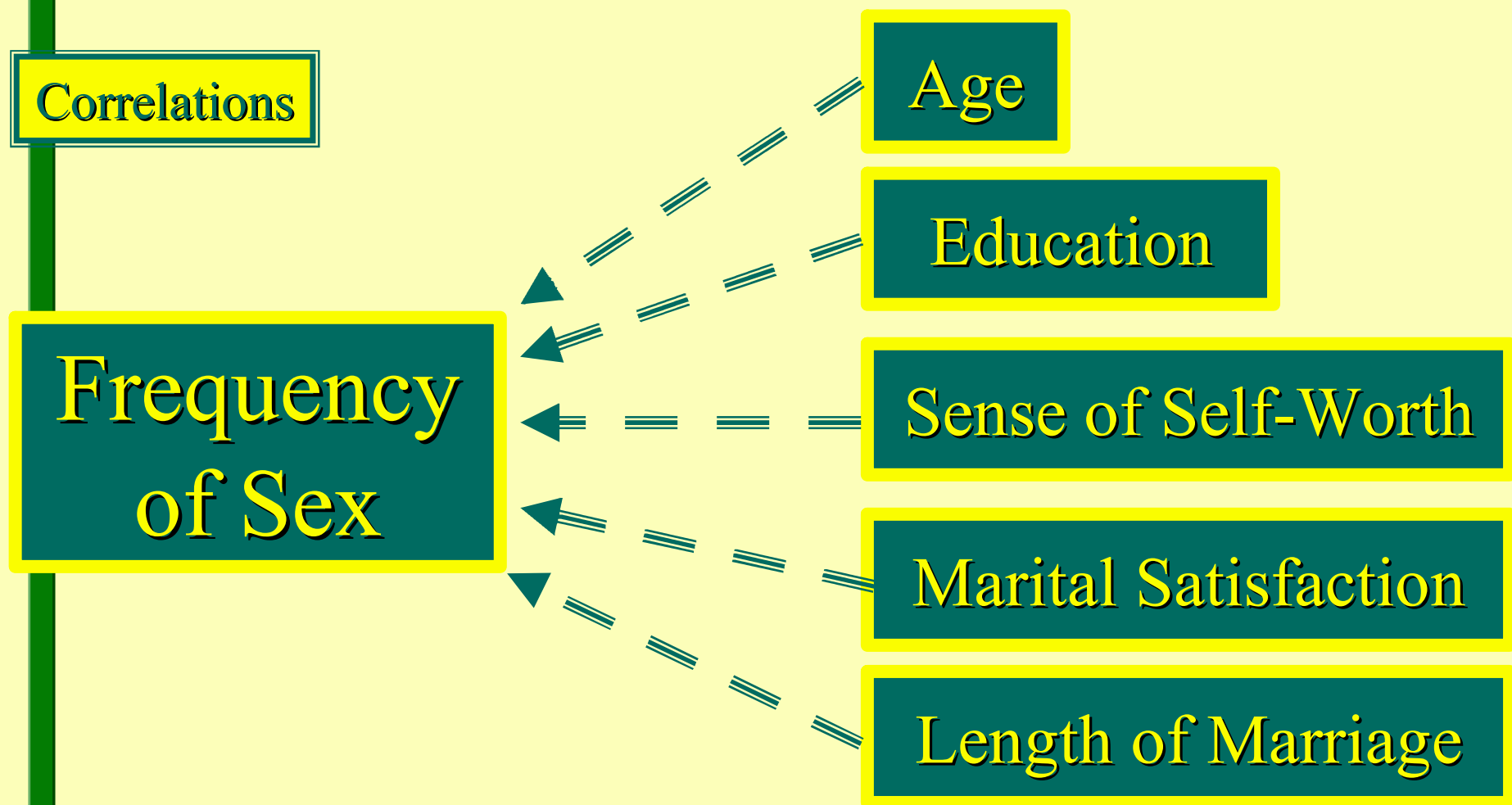
The Questions about your Sexuality:

- 1. How many times do you have sex in an average month?
- 2. To what extent do you enjoy your sexual activities?
- 3. What types of sexual problems are you encountering?
- 4. What do you like most about sex now?
- 5. What do you like least about sex now?

Growth of the 65+ Population, by Age Group: 1900 to 2050



- ☞ Stanley (1991) - National Survey of Families & Households - 13,017 Adults, 807 \geq 60 yrs. of age
- ☞ 53% reported sex in the last month



Brecher et al. (1984): *Consumer Reports Survey* -
N=4246, 42% response rate

<u>WOMEN</u>	50s	60s	70s+
Masturbation	47%	37%	33%
Sex w/ spouse	88%	76%	65%
<u>MEN</u>			
Masturbation	66%	50%	43%
Sex w/ spouse	87%	78%	59%

Sexual Interest, Activity in Older Adults

SEXUAL INTEREST AND ACTIVITY IN OLDER ADULTS

	AGED 50-59	AGED 60-69	AGED 70 AND OLDER
Sexually active*			
Women	93% (N** = 801)	81% (N = 719)	65% (N = 324)
Men	98% (N = 823)	91% (N = 981)	79% (N = 598)
Sexually active, reporting sexual activity at least once a week*			
Women	73% (N = 743)	63% (N = 582)	50% (N = 211)
Men	90% (N = 804)	73% (N = 893)	58% (N = 473)
Sexually active, reporting a high level of sexual enjoyment*			
Women	71% (N = 743)	65% (N = 582)	61% (N = 211)
Men	90% (N = 804)	86% (N = 893)	75% (N = 471)

*Includes sex with a partner or alone (masturbation)

**N = number of people surveyed

From: *Love, Sex, and Aging* by Edward M. Brecher and the Editors of Consumer Reports Books.
Copyright © 1984. Little, Brown and Company.

% of People Still Sexually Active with Partners by Age

PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE STILL SEXUALLY ACTIVE WITH PARTNERS, BY AGE

SEXUALLY ACTIVE WITH PARTNERS		
<i>Age</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
70-74	30%	65%
75-79	22%	53%
80-84	9%	48%

Source: Data from E. Laumann, J. Gagnon, R Michael, and S Michaels *The Social Organization of Sexuality* (Chicago University of Chicago Press, 1994).

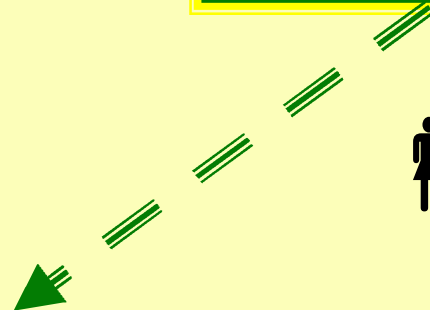
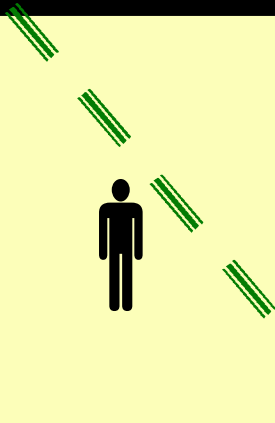
Physical deterioration

Availability and interest of partner

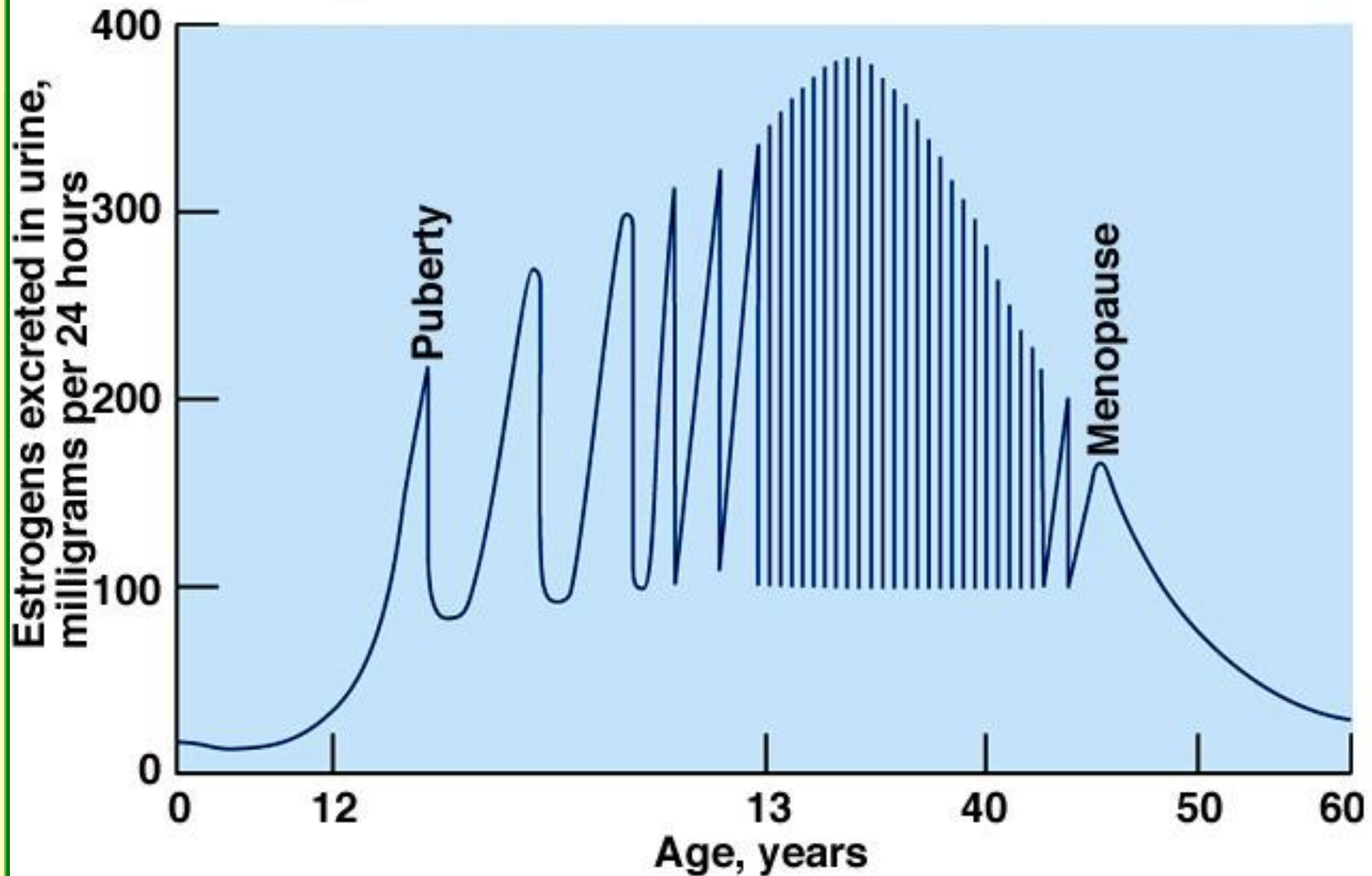
Attitudes and expectations about sex in old age



Sexual activity when one is elderly



Estrogen Production in Women



Changes in female sexual arousal often associated with aging

- ⊗ Reduced muscle tension.
- ⊗ Reduced vaginal lubrication
- ⊗ Reduced elasticity of vaginal walls
- ⊗ Smaller increases of breasts during sexual intercourse
- ⊗ Reduced intensity of muscle spasms at orgasm

Pros & Cons of Estrogen Replacement Therapy for Older Women

■ Pros

- May help prevent bone loss if started early
- May reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease
- May affect cholesterol levels & reduce heart attack risk

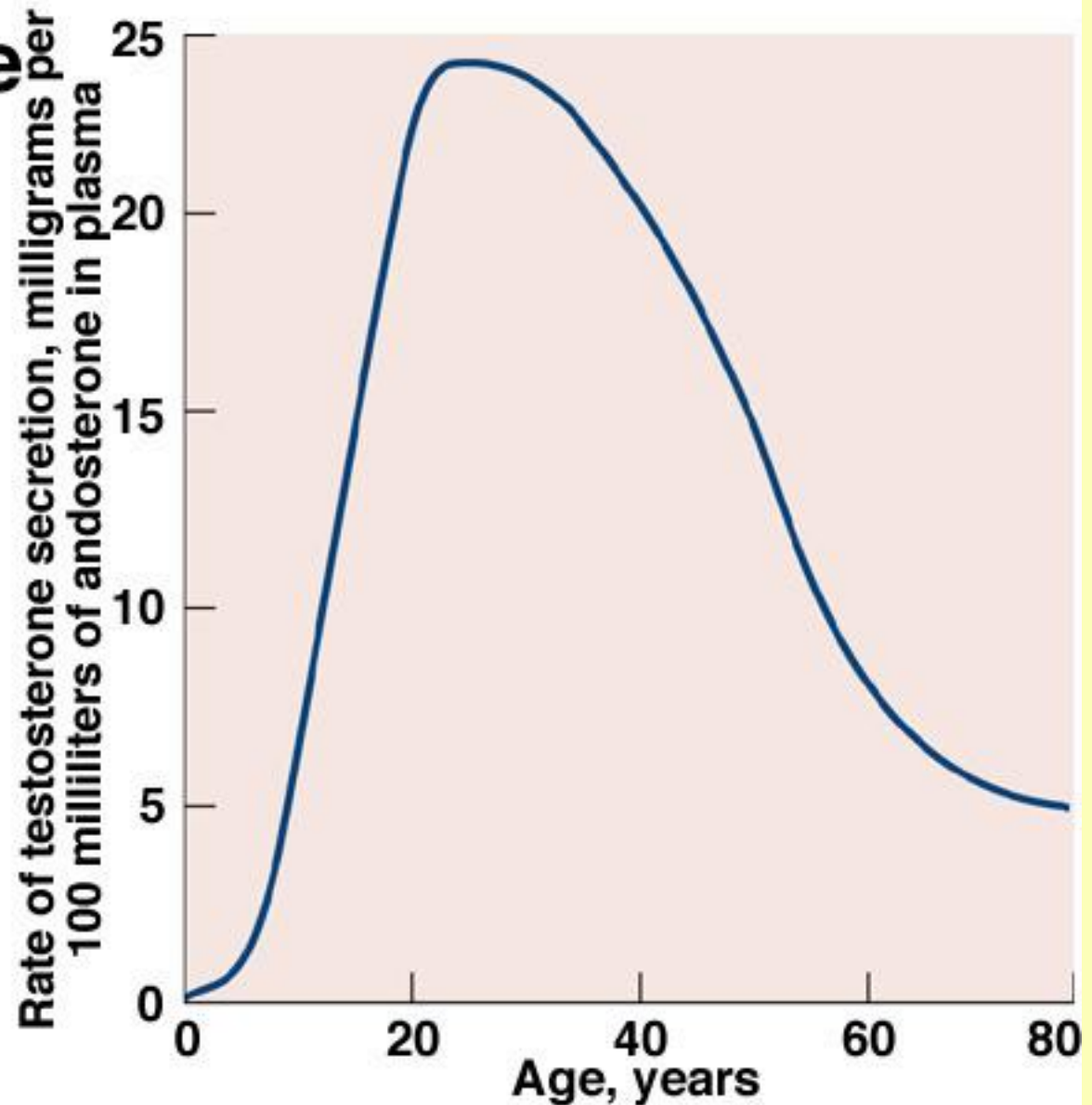
■ Cons

- May increase the risks for some forms of cancer, especially when progestin is not also given

Testosterone production also decreases after menopause in women

- Research has found that testosterone patches may improve the sexual function and psychological well-being of women who have undergone surgical menopause (removal of the ovaries and uterus).

Testosterone Production in Men



Changes in male sexual arousal often associated with aging

- ⊗ Longer time to erection & orgasm
- ⊗ Need for more direct stimulation for erection & orgasm
- ⊗ Less semen emitted during ejaculation
- ⊗ Erections may be less firm
- ⊗ Testicles may not elevate as high into scrotum

Changes in male sexual arousal often associated with aging-

(CONTINUED)

- ❖ Less intense orgasmic contractions
- ❖ Lessen feeling of need to ejaculate during sex
- ❖ Longer refractory period

Source: *The Kinsey Institute Report on Sex* (1990)

Pros & Cons of Testosterone Replacement Therapy for Men

■ Pros

- May enhance libido (sexual desire), the frequency of sexual acts, and sleep-related erections
- May improve positive mood parameters, such as feelings of wellness and friendliness, while reducing negative mood parameters, such as anger, nervousness, and irritability
- May reduce depression
- May increase lean body mass and decrease in body fat, increase weight and muscle size

■ Cons

- May increase the risks for some forms of cancer, especially prostate cancer
- May lower sperm count (azoospermia)
- May be related to bone marrow disorders & sleep apnea

Frequent Ejaculation May Reduce Men's Risk of Prostate Cancer

- Most men develop prostate cancer in old age
- Harvard study (2004) of 30,000 health care professionals
- The cancer risk in men who reported *more than 20 monthly ejaculations* was 33 percent less than that of other men
- The activity may flush out a buildup of toxins in the prostate, lessen development of tiny crystals linked to some cancers, and improve the immune system's response to cancer. It may also reduce psychological tension

לפנים ולחדירה מוקנית חשיבות רבה מידי

ניתן ליהנות

מחיבוק,

נישוק,

עיסוי,

ליטוף,

נישוף,

ליקוק,

דגדוג,

ערסול.....

*Will you still need me? Will you still
feed me when I'm 64? (From Beatles Song)*

- According to Masters and Johnson 2 factors are critical in maintaining sexual capacity

in old age:

- Good physical and mental health

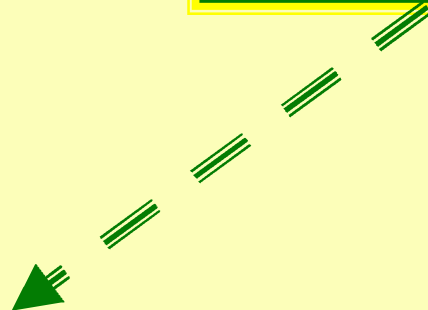
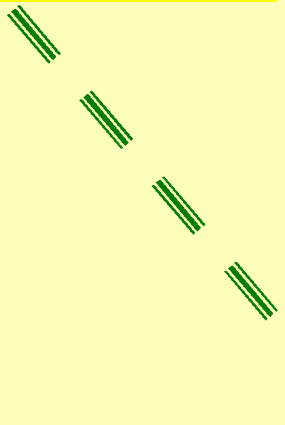
- Regularity of sexual expression - “if you don’t use it, you lose it”

Physical
deterioration

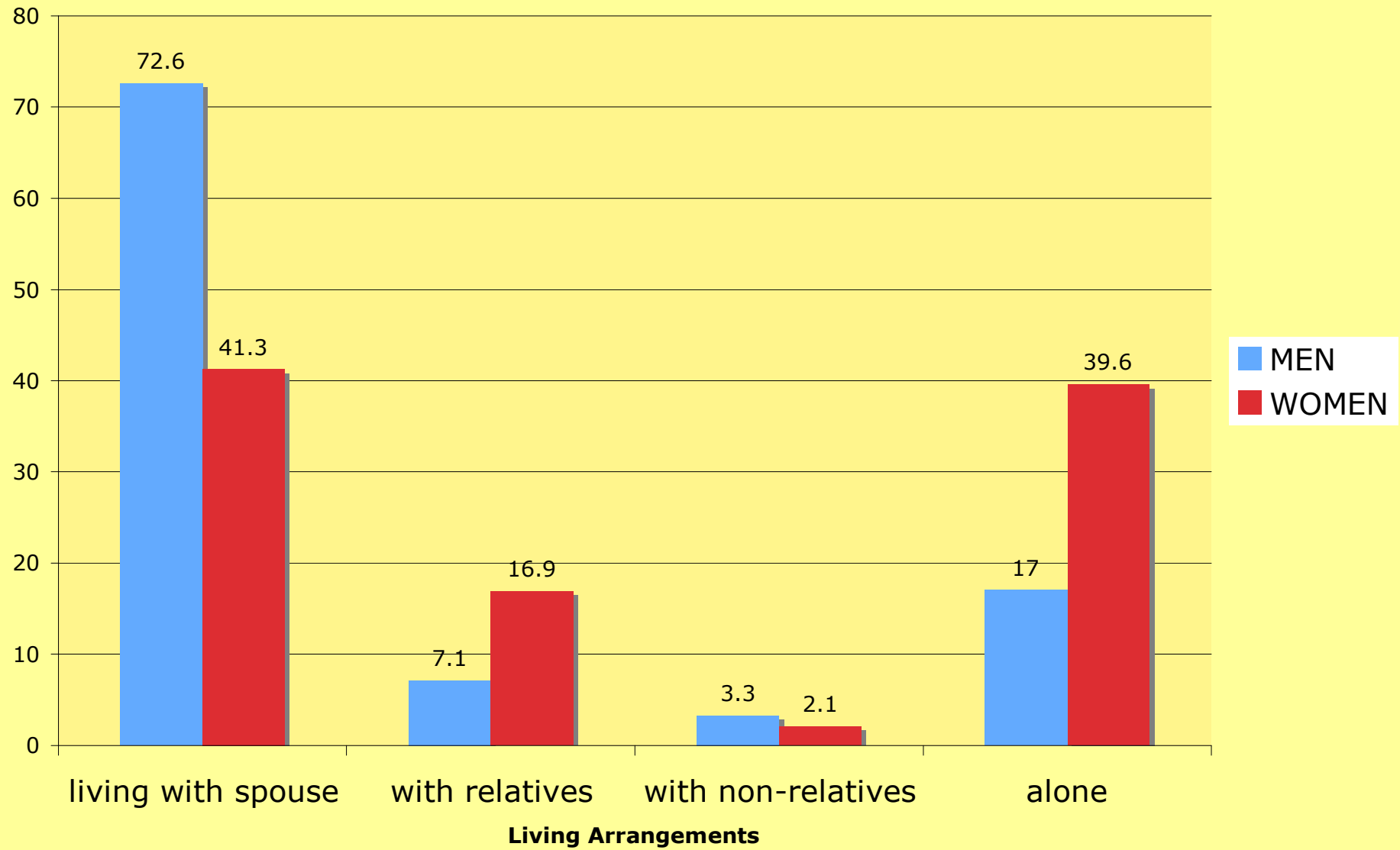
Availability
and interest
of partner

Attitudes
and
expectations
about sex
in old age

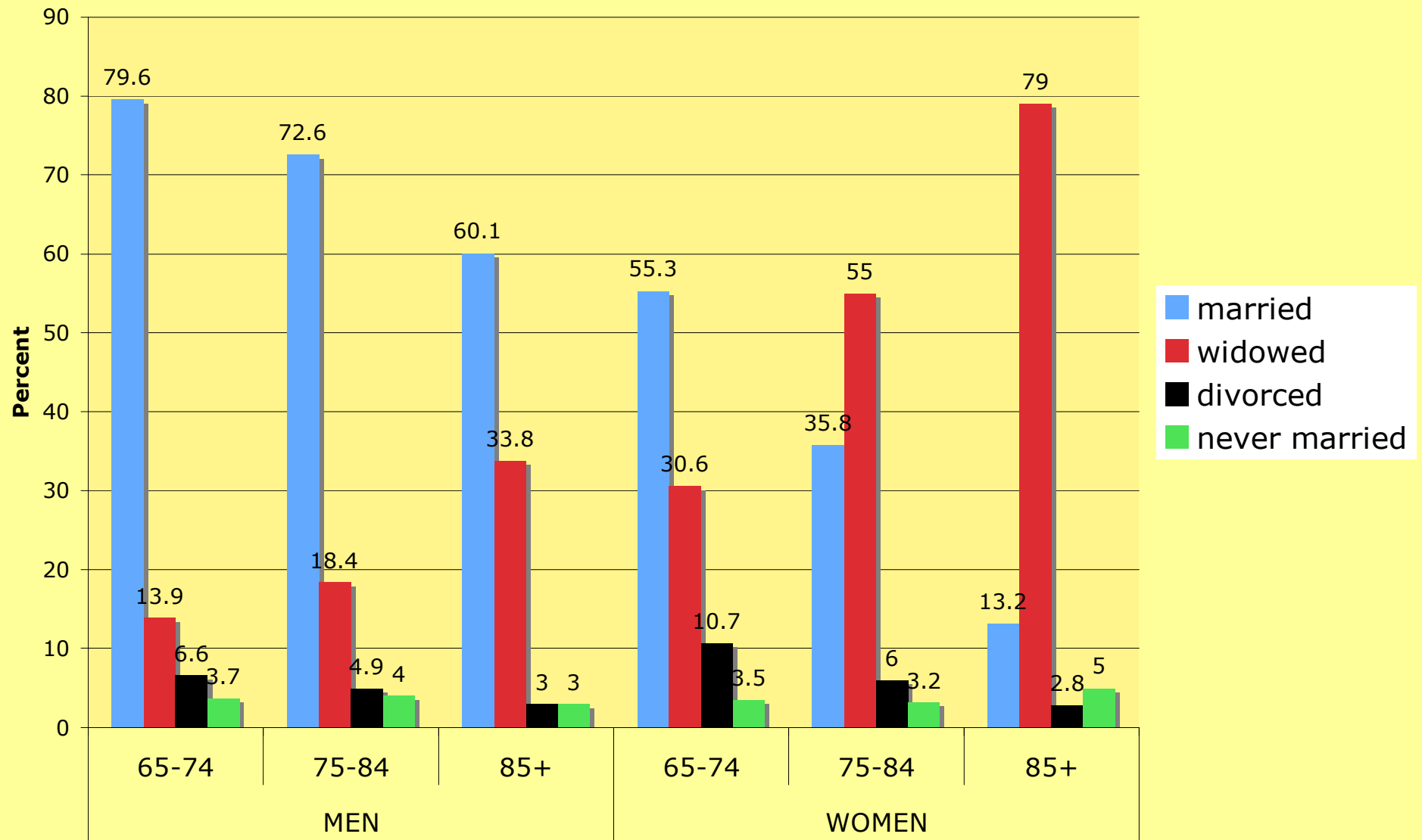
Sexual activity
when one
is elderly



Living Arrangements of Americans over 65 in 2000



Marital Status of Americans over 65 in 2002



AARP Survey in 1999 of 1,384 Americans over 45

General Opinions on Sex Strongly Agree or Agree

	Men			Women		
	45-59 (341)	60-74 (205)	75+ (90)	45-59 (368)	60-74 (259)	75+ (119)
<i>(Base)</i>						
Sexual activity is important to my overall quality of life	70.7%	51.0%	34.8%	47.8%	24.9%	13.4%
Sexual activity is a critical part of a good relationship	68.3%	55.6%	45.1%	54.6%	44.5%	44.4%
Sexual activity is a duty to one's spouse/partner	32.2%	31.9%	37.5%	23.8%	26.0%	38.3%
Sexual activity is a pleasurable, but not necessary, part of a good relationship	48.0%	49.4%	61.1%	48.7%	58.3%	49.3%
Sex becomes less important to people as they age	30.3%	45.4%	56.5%	24.6%	47.3%	51.7%
I do not particularly enjoy sex	0.8%	3.3%	2.7%	10.9%	24.4%	24.3%
I would be quite happy never having sex again	1.2%	4.7%	5.4%	9.2%	28.4%	36.4%
Sex is only for younger people	0.4%	3.0%	4.8%	1.8%	6.7%	11.9%
People should not have a sexual relationship if they are not married	27.9%	37.9%	50.0%	35.6%	52.9%	66.2%

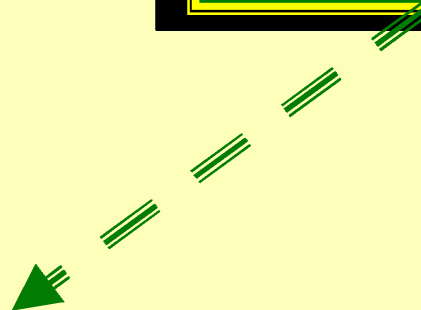
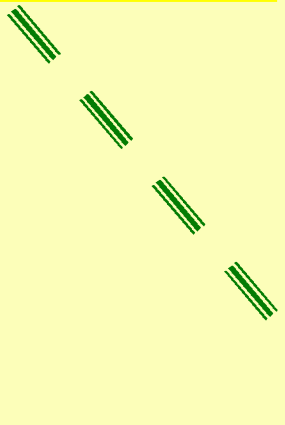
V1 (male questionnaire) Q1. 17/V2 (female questionnaire) Q1. 21: For each of the following statements, please indicate how much you agree or disagree.

Physical
deterioration

Availability
and interest
of partner

Attitudes
and
expectations
about sex
in old age

Sexual activity
when one
is elderly



Nine oldsters booted out of nursing home — for trying to have an orgy!

LONDON — A group of nine love-hungry codgers were booted out of an old folks' home — after they tried to have an orgy in the recreation room!

The unidentified oldsters, who ranged in age from 73 to 98, had apparently planned the unauthorized after-hours get-together for weeks, according to Melinda Helterford, spokesperson for the well-respected Edith Scarborough Nursing Home.

"They somehow got it in their heads to celebrate the 90th birthday of one of the women with a kind of sex party," said Miss Helterford.

"This may sound harmless or amusing to some people, but Scarborough has a reputation to uphold. We cannot tolerate that kind of conduct."

By **MIKE FOSTER**
Weekly World News

The nursing home made a concerted effort to keep the bizarre story out of the press and so details are difficult to come by.

But according to British papers, the let-it-all-hang-out party took place just after midnight on October 28. The three wrinkly Romeos and six sagging seductresses gathered together in the rec room and stripped to the buff.

"They really set the scene," a nursing home staffer who was not identified told a London tabloid. "They'd got

their hands on candles, which they lit, and even put on music to create a sexy mood."

The nude geezer gala went on for about 20 minutes before orderlies heard rumba music coming from the recreational room and went to investigate.

When they opened the doors, they were shocked to find the old-timers crowded together in their birthday suits, slathered with baby oil.

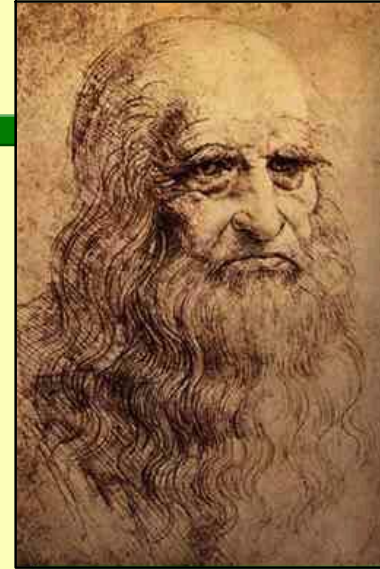
"They hadn't got too far — I guess it was taking some of the gents a while to get started," the staffer said.

"But they were all naked. Believe me, it was the scariest thing I've seen in my life."

Attitude Barriers toward Sex among the Elderly

☞ Stigma of Old Age

- Sex is for the Young
- Old sex is disgusting
- Old people interested in sex are ‘Lechers’
- The double standard - old men are dignified, old women are a turn off



Talking with older women...

- “The longer you live you start to realize ...life is too short... and sex is probably one of the last things to go.”
- “You are always a sexual being, until you die.”
- “You know, just because we are old doesn’t mean that when I see a nice grey-haired older man.. I take another look.”

Apart from myths, what are other barriers

- Physiological changes
- lack of privacy
- illness & Socio-Economic Problems
- lack of a partner
- negative attitudes from staff & physicians
- feeling of unattractiveness
- guilt & “widow’s syndrome

Thinking about barriers

- “My husband got used to me after 50 years... if I was to start up with a new man now...if we could do it in the dark with our clothes on...”
- “There are no single guys out there...not at our age.”

Why do older people stop having sex?

- For the same reasons they stop riding a bicycle
 - fear of falling off (ill health)
 - afraid of looking ridiculous
 - lack of a bicycle



What research tells us...

- The Kinsey report: general decline interest & activity
- M&J: “sharp decline in interest after age 60”
- other generally gloomy results

Newer results...

- The Starr-Weiner report:
 - 97% liked sex
 - 91% approved of unmarried/widowed aged having sex
 - quality more important than frequency!
 - Women in survey had intercourse 1.4/week

Even educated fleas do it...

- Large proportion of seniors sexually active:
 - 54% of married men & women
 - 65% of women over age 70
- Netherlands: 34 % of women surveyed enjoy sexual activity most of time
 - Vs. 70% of premenopausal women

Defining sexuality more clearly than Clinton

- Women age 80-102:
 - 25% had regular partner
 - touching and caressing 64%
 - masturbation 40%
 - intercourse 30%
- activities often dependent on older partner

Physiology & the pleasure principle

- Women:
 - reduced size of vagina & vulva
 - decreased vascularity & secretions
 - thinner, more lax vaginal walls
 - atrophic vaginitis common
 - libido declines but rarely disappears

What problems may women report

- 43% of older Swedes reported vaginal dryness
- 10% vaginal burning
- urinary incontinence may occur
- dyspareunia
- decreased orgasm (30%)

How does the sexual cycle change?

- Excitement!

- Decreased vasocongestion, lubrication, delayed arousal

- Plateau:

- expansion of vaginal ‘barrel’, orgasmic platform, clitoral retraction

Cycle changes...

- Orgasm:
 - shorter & fewer contractions
 - may be painful
- Resolution:
 - more rapid reversion to pre-arousal state

What changes for men?

- Changed libido
- erectile function
 - increased need for stimulation
 - inadequate rigidity associated with risk factors
- decreased ejaculatory demand
- decreased ejaculatory power
- prolonged refractory stage (up to one week)

Talking to your granny about

SEX!

- Important indicator of comorbidities
- if done appropriately, not offensive
- 91% over age 65 felt history-taking was appropriate
- remember that identification & education very successful
- sexual abuse can still occur

Hearing from the NIH

- Health-providers should help us feel comfortable talking about sex:
 - don't be afraid or embarrassed
 - help us “break the ice”
 - offer permission to express feelings & needs

Suggestions to help talking about it

- ... be open-minded and concerned:
 - don't assume there are no concerns
 - ask direct questions about activity & attitudes
 - answer honestly
 - don't evade sexual concerns

More...

- ...should treat older adults with respectful & non-judgemental attitude
 - see us as individuals with sexual needs
 - accept us: gay, straight, bisexual
- ...can provide advice & suggestions:

What did A women have to say?

- “So, how’s your sex life?” not a great line
- valid question if an explanation is given
- would talk to their MD if something specifically wrong
- layman’s terms, avoid making patient feel complaint insignificant

Getting better informed about specific topics

- Menopause
- Viagra, Cialis, Levitra
- Dementia
- Sexual abuse
- Chronic illnesses

Menopause: just a few controversies

■ Treatments:

- ERT
- education of woman & partner
- ?testosterone
- lubricants
- education about male partner's aging changes

Listening to Viagra

- “Dr. Ian Osterloh may be one of the most important men in American history, if not world history”



PDE5i's: medical information

- Serendipitous discovery
- inhibits phosphodiesterase
- elevates serum levels of cyclic guanosine monophosphate
- effect is on erectile dysfunction not libido

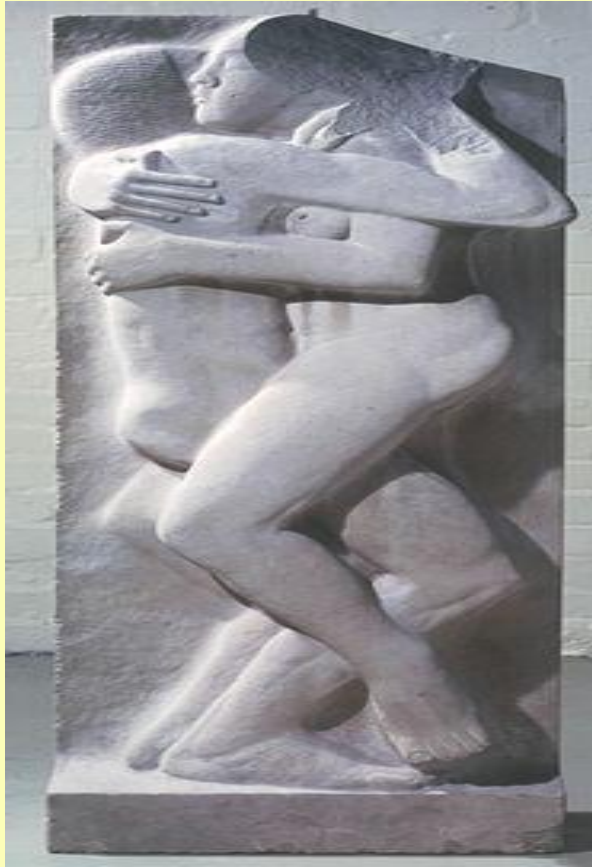
Are we guilty of “ageism”?

Bouman & Arcelus, 2001

- Mailed questionnaire
- 2 vignettes of male with low mood
- Middle-aged & elderly
- Sexual history **OFTEN** omitted in elderly
- Elderly **NOT** referred to specialized care



Conclusions



- Sexuality **is** very important for the elderly
- More so for aging men
- Health primarily affects men
- Partner primarily affects women
- Cognitive functioning is important
- We need to ASK more

WHAT MATTERS MOST
IS HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF.

