Ejaculation without orgasm? is it possible? [1]

Dear Alice,

My boyfriend recently told me that he rarely has orgasms when he ejaculates. I was aware that men could have orgasms without ejaculation, but I didn't think it worked the other way around. Are men more complicated than I thought?

Answer

Dear Reader,

Many people experience orgasms differently, men included. In their book, The Sexual Male: Problems and Solutions, Richard Milsten and Julian Slowinski state that, "Orgasm and ejaculation are so closely related that men tend to use the term 'orgasm' to describe the overall experience and sensation, although the two can be desynchronized (i.e., there can be ejaculation without orgasm and orgasm without ejaculation)."

Ejaculatory anhedonia is the term used to describe the condition in which men are able to ejaculate physically but do not have the accompanying feelings of release, pleasure, or orgasm. Sometimes referred to as "anorgasmic ejaculation," it causes no physical harm. Ejaculatory anhedonia may or may not be what is happening in your boyfriend's case.

You say that your boyfriend "rarely has orgasms when he ejaculates." What do you mean by "rarely"? Does he have orgasms at other times during oral, vaginal, and/or anal sex, but not when ejaculating? Does he find that other sexual sensations give him the feeling of release or orgasmic pleasure? What about when he masturbates? And, exactly how rare is "rarely"?

Obviously, your boyfriend feels comfortable enough with his situation to tell you. Does it bother him that he rarely has orgasms when he ejaculates? Does it bother you? If not, then it isn't really anything to worry about. As Bernie Zilbergeld, author of The New Male Sexuality, states, "Sometimes there is no peak feeling and sometimes that feeling comes long before ejaculation. Some men don't have a lot of feeling when they ejaculate, and some men have lots of peak feelings, with and without ejaculations. There is no good and bad, right and wrong, about any of this."

If your boyfriend feels like this is something he would like to address, a health care provider, specifically a urologist, could work with him to find out exactly what is going on. A few simple tests could provide the answer. If the cause is not hormonal or physiological, then the next step may include seeing a sex therapist. You and/or your boyfriend can check out the web site for the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT) [2] to
find a therapist in your area. Whatever you decide, continued communication between you and your boyfriend about your orgasm experiences may help determine what works best for you both.

Alice!

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