Buying a vibrator? Is it normal? [1]

Hi Alice,

Is it normal for a 20 year old girl to buy a vibrator?

Answer

Dear Reader,

Have no fear! Vibrator use and sexual exploration is both common and healthy throughout the lifespan. In one internet-based survey of women between ages 18 to 60, over 50 percent of survey participants reported vibrator use. That said, there remain many misconceptions and myths and about female sexuality and sexual health — vibrator use included! There is also a lot of historical negativity when it comes to female sexuality. It’s about time we changed that, don’t you think? Here are some sexy facts to hopefully demystify any rumors that still abound:

Vibrators can be good for you!

Vibrator and sex toy exploration are great ways to discover and enhance sexual enjoyment and also become more familiar and comfortable with your body. Whether you sexual vibrations are solo or with a partner, sex play of all kinds can have both physical and psychological health benefits.

Vibrator use may also be associated with positive health behaviors and sexual function. Remember that internet survey mentioned above? Participants who reported vibrator use were also more likely to:

- Have had a gynecological exam during the past year.
- Have performed genital self-exam during the previous month.
- Score higher on sexual function tests, indicating a healthy level of sexual arousal and satisfaction.

Everyone may actually be doing what you’re doing.

It’s pretty common to think you’re the exception to the rule in many situations and our beliefs about sex are no exception. While vibrator use is common and viewed positively by many, there still seems to be a disconnect between what women believe and what they do. One study revealed that while female participants believed most women self-penetrate during masturbation, the majority of respondents masturbate via clitoral stimulation (vibrators can help in that process). Some women also viewed masturbation as a routine part of their day to
help relieve tension. However, they expressed discomfort about discussing their masturbation habits with others. This is a good reminder that many times when we think we are alone in our thoughts, beliefs, desires, etc., but in fact there are many other people with similar experiences and feelings.

**Good vibrations ? friend! Not foe!**

Another study revealed that, perhaps contrary to popular belief, respondents (both male and female) had highly positive views of women?s vibrator use. In fact, those surveyed viewed vibrator use as adding to the sexual experience. Positive thoughts about vibrator use are also associated with a healthy sex drive, sexual arousal, and overall sexual well-being.

So, what is normal? Defining what is ?normal? is often a challenge, dear Reader. Research does tell us that vibrator use is common and the sexual and health benefits of masturbation are numerous [2]. There are lots of different types of vibrators out there and questions you may want to consider [3] in your pleasure pursuits?you can have lots of fun finding the vibe (or vibes!) that suits your interests. You may also want to find a sexpert (expert on sexual exploration!) to answer questions as you make your way on your sexual discovery journey. Consider checking out MySexProfessor.com [4], founded by Debby Herbenick, Ph.D., MPH, a research scientist at the Center for Sexual Health Promotion [5] at Indiana University, author, and sexual health educator at the Kinsey Institute [6]. And, for more information about sex toys, sexual health books, or otherwise, consider checking out Babeland [7], Good Vibrations [8], and Eve?s Garden [9] just to name a few!

Here?s to many more good vibrations!

Alice!

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