No orgasm = UTI? [1]

Dear Alice,

You've said that there is no medical concern if a man goes without orgasm for up to a year. Well, I have NEVER had a wet dream in my life, and if I don't have regular ejaculations, I get prostate and/or urinary infections! It's been this way for quite a few years. Going without orgasm seems to cause a build-up of seminal fluid that goes nowhere. Is this common?

Stuffed-up

Answer

Dear Stuffed-up,

It is true, the research indicates no adverse health consequences for not having orgasms, short of potential minor physical discomfort that some experience when becoming aroused without having an orgasm. Yet it is clear that you have noticed a longstanding pattern: That when you are experiencing fewer ejaculations, you experience more urinary tract and prostate infections. Despite the research, it could be that ejaculating helps to clear your urethra and any lingering bacteria, thus helping to prevent infections. It’s also possible that even though these two seem to occur together, they may not be causally related, or that the causation works in the other direction. In other words, is there any chance that the UTIs are causing you discomfort which then interferes with arousal and orgasm?

Urinary tract infections occur more frequently in women than in men because women’s urethras are shorter and more vulnerable to being exposed to bacteria from the vagina and anus. However, when men do contract UTIs, they are actually quite likely to have recurrent infections because bacteria can ?hide out? deep in prostate tissue. Not all UTIs in men will also lead to prostate infections, but they can. And when they do, they become more difficult to treat. So it could be that your orgasms help stave off re-current infections, or it could be that the infection would flair up even if you always had consistent orgasms.

But what to do about those persistently pesky bacteria? Have you expressed your concerns to a health care provider? There are numerous diagnostic tests that your health care provider could perform to determine the nature of the infection and which antibiotics might be optimal.

You may be interested to know there is some evidence (though it is still somewhat inconclusive) that more frequent ejaculations may reduce ever so slightly a person’s risk of prostate cancer. This of course, is unrelated to your UTI issue and is still under investigation, but perhaps bears mentioning given the topic at hand. In addition to having orgasms, consider
adding these UTI prevention tips to your repertoire:

- **Avoid holding your pee.** Holding in your urine allows more time for bacteria to proliferate. Urinate as frequently as you are able.
- **Drink lots of water.** Being well hydrated helps keep the urethra clear and clean.
- **Keep it clean.** Washing your penis, hands, toys, and anything else that may come into contact with your penis will help reduce the spread of bacteria to your urethra. Washing your hands before they come into contact with your penis is also an important prevention tip.

For more on UTIs, check out the Q&As below.

Alice!
Category:
*Sexual & Reproductive Health* [2]
*Orgasms* [3]
*Sexual Secretions* [4]

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- Do I have a UTI? How do I know? [6]
- Masturbation healthy? [7]
- Ouch! Burning pee! Is this a urinary tract infection (UTI)? [8]
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