

# Wondering Where Your Mojo Went?

## Six Questions with a Sex Therapist

### Interview by Shawna Page

For many women it may take more than roses and candlelight to get their engines started. **Kelli Young** is an Occupational, Sex and Couples Therapist (and member of the femMED Advisory Board). We discussed the issues surrounding the causes and solutions for low libido.

**Q:** What is libido?

**A:** Libido is your “sex drive” or “appetite” for sexual activity, either alone or with a partner.

**Q:** Is low libido a common concern with women?

**A:** Most definitely. Approximately 40 percent of women experience low sexual desire at some point. In fact, it is the most common complaint that I hear from my clients entering sex therapy.

**Q:** What is a normal sex drive?

**A:** There really is no such thing as “normal” sex drive. Women vary greatly in their desire for sex. What is important is your own subjective experience of the sex you are having, or not having. In medical terms, low sex drive, or “hypoactive sexual desire disorder” is defined as a persistent or recurrent lack of sexual fantasies, thoughts, and/or interest in sexual activity that causes personal distress.

**Q:** Why do so many women experience low libido?

**A:** Women’s sexual response is controlled by hormones, nerves, blood supply, and stimulation, both physical (e.g. touch) and psychological (e.g. fantasy or imagery). Problems or deficiencies in any of these systems can negatively affect a woman’s sexual satisfaction and in turn her desire for sex. Low libido can result when a woman is having difficulties becoming aroused. If a woman is not adequately aroused, she is unlikely to reach the



sexual peaks necessary to trigger orgasm and the sense of relaxation that often follows. Lack of arousal can be caused by or associated with insufficient vaginal lubrication, which can in turn lead to vaginal irritation or pain, and may even trigger vaginal or urinary tract infections. When sex is unfulfilling or painful, a woman is unlikely to desire it, and she may begin to fear or avoid it.

**Q:** Are there specific reasons why a woman’s sex drive changes?

**A:** All women will notice natural and normal fluctuations in their sexual appetites. Some of the variables that influence these fluctuations over time include age, hormonal changes associated with pregnancy or menopause and illness. Sexual desire is further affected by psychological health and well-being; personal experiences and beliefs regarding sex, lifestyle and relationship issues.

**Q:** Is there anything that women can do to increase their desire?

**A:** Absolutely! Often there are some relatively simple steps that women can take to improve their libido. These may include some of the following:

- Consult with a medical and/or naturopathic professional to be sure you are getting appropriate care/treatment for any underlying illnesses or physiological causes of low libido.
- Consider a natural libido supplement.
- Get to know your own body, sexually (self-stimulation).
- Use a water-based lubricant.
- Make lifestyle adjustments (exercise, sleep, stress management).
- Strengthen pelvic floor muscles (kegel exercises).
- Address relationship issues.
- Seek counseling from a sex therapist or couples counselor skilled in addressing sexual issues.

#### Shawna Page

~ is the founder and CEO of femMed, the all natural solution for women’s most common health problems.

