# Facilitating Female Sexual Function Assessment

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this project was to facilitate the conversation about sexual function at the annual visit. The goal was to provide an efficient, standardized way for a provider to assess the patient’s concerns regarding sexual dysfunction, in a clinic setting that currently did not assess women’s sexual function.

## BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

- Sexual health is a key component to overall health and quality of life
- The World Health Organization recognizes the importance of sexual health
- The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recognizes female sexual dysfunction (FSD) can adversely affect the quality of life for women
- 43% of women are affected
- Healthcare professional related factors
  - lack of adequate training in their professional programs
  - low confidence in their ability to adequately address the topic
  - perception that few treatment options are available
  - inadequate clinical time to obtain a sexual history
  - the underestimation of the prevalence of FSD

## METHOD

**Site**
Gynecology clinic in Phoenix, Arizona

**Population**
- One provider
- Women over the age of 18, English speaking, and being seen for an annual exam only

**Instrument**
Brief Sexual Symptom Checklist (Female)
- Published by Hatzichristou et al (2004)
- Recommended by multiple organizations for use in discussing female sexual function

**Process**
- Brief Sexual Symptom Checklist (Female) was used during a one-month time period
- Women that met the study criteria were offered an opportunity to complete the questionnaire
- Women choosing to participate answered the questionnaire prior to the provider entering the room
- The provider then documented if the concern was discussed, a return visit was scheduled, or a referral to another provider was given

## Conclusion

- Utilizing a sexual function assessment tool does assist the provider in identifying sexual dysfunction in women
- An assessment tool helps promote the conversation for both the provider and patient
- Women want to discuss sexual function concerns with their provider
- Asking women about sexual function can easily be incorporated into their annual visit
- The provider said, “This took less time in the visit than I originally thought it would.”
- Clinic flow was not interrupted
- No appointment schedule changes were necessary to include the assessment

## Patient Reported

### Problems with Sexual Function

1. Decreased vaginal lubrication
2. Little or no interest in sex
3. Pain during sex
4. Orgasm
5. Decreased genital sensation

### Most Bothersome Problem with Sexual Function

1. Decreased vaginal lubrication
2. Orgasm
3. Pain during sex
4. Little or no interest in sex
5. Decreased genital sensation

## Satisfaction with Sexual Function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N=34</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with Sexual Function</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Provider Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussed</th>
<th>Return Visit</th>
<th>Referral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% *</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Provider Action

- Discussed
- Return Visit
- Referral