Female Orgasmic Difficulty/Disorder (FOD): A Serious Public Health Problem

Jordan Tishler, MD

President, Association of Cannabinoid Specialists

Vice President, Female Orgasm Research Institute
Instructor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School

CEO inhaleMD



Female Orgasm Difficulty (FOD) Facts

- FOD is a serious public health problem,¹ affecting the quality of life and health up to 41% of women world-wide.²
- > The percentage of women suffering from FOD has not changed in 50 years.3
- > A paucity of validated treatments exist.^{4,5}
- There are no truly effective conventional medications to treat FOD.⁶



Female Orgasm Difficulty (FOD) Facts continued

- FOD has well known links to:
 - ► Anxiety and depression ⁷⁻⁹
 - ► Psychosocial stressors ¹⁰⁻¹²
 - ▶ Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) ¹³⁻¹⁵
 - ► Childhood sexual abuse ¹⁶⁻¹⁷
 - Other physical illness or disability ¹⁸⁻²⁰



Cannabis for FOD Treatment

- More than 50 years of research reveals that cannabis helps women orgasm and helps women orgasm who have FOD.²¹⁻⁴¹
- Researchers have recommended cannabis as a treatment for FOD and other sexual disorders for decades. ^{22-24,32,35,41}
- Cannabis dose is an important factor in sexual functioning and orgasm response.^{24-27, 30, 33,36}
- Doctors, medical clinics, and sex therapists recommend cannabis to their clients who have FOD, including women with anorgasmia.⁴²⁻⁴⁵



Clinical Perspective

- ▶ In practice of cannabinoid medicine > 12 years, over 12,000 patients treated
- ► The cost of sexual dysfunction cannot be overstated: causing anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem; relationship strife, family conflict and dissolution.
- Sexual dysfunction is poorly recognized and treated with very little advancement over the past 50 years



Clinical Perspective

- When implemented using correct protocols and dose, cannabis can be very effective for FOD, as well as several other male and female sexual difficulties
- Interesting side note, many patients who come in for something else anxiety, insomnia, cancer symptom management return saying, "oh, by the way, doc, I'm having the best sex of my life"
- Data support state-based programs implementing cannabis for FOD as a "qualifying condition"



References

- 1. Laumann, E. O., Paik, A., & Rosen, R. C. (1999). Sexual dysfunction in the United States. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 281(6), 537-544. https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.281.6.537
- 2. Laumann, E. O., Nicolosi, A., Glasser, D. B., Paik, A., Gingell, C., Moreira, E., & Wang, T. (2005). Sexual problems among women and men aged 40–80 y: Prevalence and correlates identified in the *Global Study of Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors*. *International Journal of Impotence Research*, *17*(1), 39–57. https://doi.org/10.1038/sj.ijir.3901250
- 3. Kontula, O., & Miettinen, A. (2016). Determinants of female sexual orgasms. *Socioaffective Neuroscience & Psychology*, *6*(1), 31624. https://doi.org/10.3402/snp.v6.31624
- 4. Heiman, J. R., & Meston, M. M. (1997). Empirically validated treatment for sexual dysfunction. Annual Review of Sex Research, 8(1), 148–194.
- 5. Marchand, E. (2020). Psychological and behavioral treatment of female orgasmic disorder. Sexual Medicine Reviews, 9(2), 194–211. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sxmr.2020.07.007
- 6. Adrian Preda, M. (2023, November 8). Female orgasmic disorder treatment & management. Approach Considerations, Psychotherapy, Pharmacotherapy. https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/2185837-treatment?form=fpf
- 7. Meston, C.M., Hull, E., Levin, R.J., Sipski M. (2004). Disorders of orgasm in women. J Sex Med. 1(1):66-68. doi:10.1111/j.1743-6109.2004.10110.x
- 8. Ventegodt, S., & Merrick, J.. (2008). Theory of sexuality and psychological causes of sexual problems. Psychological Sexual Dysfunctions. p.121-146.
- 9. Pauls, R. N., Kleeman, S. D., & Karram, M. M. (2005). Female sexual dysfunction: Principles of diagnosis and therapy. *Obstetrical & Gynecological Survey*, 60(3), 196–205. https://doi.org/10.1097/01.ogx.0000157978.91721.0f
- 10. Cuntim, M., Nobre, P. (2011). The role of cognitive distraction on female orgasm. Sexologies. 20(4):212–214. doi:10.1016/j.sexol.2011.08.001
- 11. Dove, N.L., Wiederman, M.W. Cognitive distraction and women's sexual functioning. (2000). J Sex Marital Ther,. 26(1):67–78. doi:10.1080/009262300278650
- 12. Adam, F., Géonet, M., Day, J., Sutter, P.D. (2014). Mindfulness skills are associated with female orgasm? Sex Relation Ther. 2014;30(2):256–267. doi: 10.1080/14681994.2014.986085
- 12. Letourneau, E. J., Resnick, H. S., Kilpatrick, D. G., Saunders, B. E., & Best, C. L. (1996). Comorbidity of sexual problems and posttraumatic stress disorder in female crime victims. *Behavior Therapy*, 27(3), 321–336. https://www.doi.org/10.1016/s0005-7894(96)80020-7
- 13. O'Driscoll C, Flanagan E. (2016). Sexual problems and post-traumatic stress disorder following sexual trauma: A meta-analytic review. *Psychol Psychother Theory*, Res Pract 2016;89:351–367. doi: 10.1111/papt.12077
- 14. Bird, E. R., Piccirillo, M., Garcia, N., Blais, R., & Campbell, S. (2021). Relationship between posttraumatic stress disorder and sexual difficulties: A systematic review of veterans and military personnel. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 18(8), 1398–1426. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsxm.2021.05.011
- 15. Yehuda R, Lehrner A, Rosenbaum TY. (2015). PTSD and sexual dysfunction in men and women. J Sex Med. 2015;12(5):1107-1119. doi:10.1111/jsm.12856
- 16. Kinzl, J.F., Traweger, C., Biebl, W. (1995). Sexual dysfunctions: relationship to childhood sexual abuse and early family experiences in a nonclinical sample. *Child Abuse Negl.* 19(7):785-792. doi:10.1016/0145-2134(95)00048-d
- 17. Najman, J. M., Dunne, M. P., Purdie, D. M., Boyle, F. M., & Coxeter, P. D. (2005). Sexual abuse in childhood and sexual dysfunction in adulthood: An Australian population-based study. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 34(5), 517–526. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-005-6277-6

References continued

- 18. Schaffer, P., & Regina. (2023, June 14). Female sexual dysfunction with heart failure "underrecognized and undertreated." Healio. https://www.healio.com/news/cardiology/20230614/female-sexual-dysfunction-with-heart-failure-underrecognized-and-undertreated
- 19. Shifren, Jan L.; Monz, Brigitta U.; Russo, Patricia A.; Segreti, Anthony; Johannes, Catherine B. (2008). Sexual Problems and Distress in United States Women. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 112(5), 970–978. doi:10.1097/aoq.0b013e3181898cdb
- 20. Pontiroli, A. E., Cortelazzi, D., & Morabito, A. (2013). Female sexual dysfunction and diabetes: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 10(4), 1044–1051. https://doi.org/10.1111/jsm.12065
- 21. Chopra, G. S., & Jandu, B. S. (1976). Psychoclinical effects of long-term marijuana use in 275 Indian chronic users. A comparative assessment of effects in Indian and USA users. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 282(1 Chronic Canna), 95–108. doi:10.1111/j.1749-6632.1976.tb49889.x
- 22. Dawley, H. H., Baxter, A. S., Winstead, D. K., & Gay, J. R. (1979). An attitude survey of the effects of marijuana on sexual enjoyment. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 35(1), 212–217. https://www.doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679(197901)35:13.0.co;2-k
- 23. Fisher G, Steckler A. (1974). Psychological effects, personality and behavioral changes attributed to marihuana use. *Int J Addict*. 9(1):101-26. doi: 10.3109/10826087409046773.
- 24. Goode, E. (1969). Marijuana and sex. Evergreen, (19-21; 72-73.)
- 25. Goode, E. (1970). The marijuana smokers. Basic Books.
- 26. Goode, E. (1972). Sex and marijuana. Sexual Behavior, 2, 45–51.
- 27. Gorzalka, B. B., Hill, M. N., Chang, S. C. (2010). Male–female differences in the effects of cannabinoids on sexual behavior and gonadal hormone function. Hormones and Behavior, 58(1), 91–99. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yhbeh.2009.08.009
- 28. Halikas, J., Weller, R., & Morse, C. (1982). Effects of regular marijuana use on sexual performance. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs, 14*(1–2), 59–70. https://www.doi.org/10.1080/02791072.1982.10471911
- 29. Haines, L., & Green, W. (1970). Marijuana use patterns. The British Journal of Addiction to Alcohol and Other Drugs, 65(4), 347–362. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1360-0443.1970.tb03954.x
- 30. Kasman, A. M., Bhambhvani, H. P., Wilson-King, G., & Eisenberg, M. L. (2020). Assessment of the association of cannabis on female sexual function with the female sexual function index. Sexual Medicine, 8(4), 699-708. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esxm.2020.06.009
- 31. Koff, W. (1974). Marijuana and sexual activity. Journal of Sex Research, 10(3), 194–204. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224497409550850
- 32. Lewis, B. (1970). The sexual power of marijuana. Wyden.
- 33. Lynn, B. K., López, J. D., Miller, C., Thompson, J., & Campian, E. C. (2019). The relationship between marijuana use prior to sex and sexual function in women. Sexual Medicine, 7(2), 192–197. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esxm.2019.01.003
- 34. Moser, A. (2019). The influence of cannabis on sexual functioning and satisfaction. [Master's thesis, East Carolina University]. The ScholarShip, East Carolina University's Institutional Repository. http://thescholarship.ecu.edu/handle/10342/7291
- 35. Moser, A., Ballard, S. M., Jensen, J., & Averett, P. (2023). The influence of cannabis on sexual functioning and satisfaction. *Journal of Cannabis Research*, *5*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s42238-022-00169-2
- 36. Palamar, J. J., Acosta, P., Ompad, D. C., & Friedman, S. R. (2016). A qualitative investigation comparing psychosocial and physical sexual experiences related to alcohol and marijuana use among adults. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 47(3), 757–770. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-016-0782-7

References continued

- 37. Smith, A. M. A., Ferris, J. A., Simpson, J. M., Shelley, J., Pitts, M. K., & Richters, J. (2010). Cannabis Use and Sexual Health. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 7(2), 787–793. doi:10.1111/j.1743-6109.2009.01453.x
- 38. Traub S. Perceptions of marijuana and its effects: a comparison of users and non-users. *Br J Addict.* 1977;72:67–74.
- 39. Weller, R. A., & Halikas, J. A. (1984). Marijuana use and sexual behavior. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 20(2), 186–193. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224498409551216
- 40. Wiebe, E., & Just, A. (2019). How Cannabis Alters Sexual Experience: A Survey of Men and Women. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 16(11), 1758–1762. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsxm.2019.07.023
- 41. Mulvehill, S., & Tishler, J. (2023, May 18-19). Assessment of cannabis use before partnered sex on women who report orgasm difficulty. [Conference presentation abstract]. Cannabis Clinical Outcomes Research Conference, Orlando, FL, United States. . https://ccorc.mmjoutcomes.org/2023/04/21/cannabis-helps-women-orgasm-and-increases-the-frequency-of-orgasm-in-women-who-report-difficulty-orgasming/
- 42. inhaleMD. (2017). *Marijuana for male and female sexual dysfunction in Boston, Massachusetts*. https://inhalemd.com/marijuana-male-female-sexual dysfunction in Boston, Massachusetts. https://inhalemd.com/marijuana-male-female-sexual-dysfunction-boston-massachusetts.
- 43. Dalziel, J. (2020a, February 12). *Let's talk about sex! And cannabis Part 1*. Canada House Clinics. https://canadahouseclinics.ca/2020/02/12/lets-talk-about-sex-and-cannabis-part-1/
- 44. Dalziel, J. (2020b, February 14). *Let's talk about sex! And cannabis Part* 2. Canada House Clinics. https://canadahouseclinics.ca/2020/02/14/lets-talk-about-sex-and-cannabis-part-2/
- 45. Zinko, C. (Host). (2018, February 13). Sexologist Diana Urman on using cannabis to achieve orgasm, and more. [Audio podcast]. The hash podcast. https://soundcloud.com/thehashpodcast/sexologist-diana-urman-talks-cannabis-and-coitus