



FIVE-WAY FIX ...

low libido

Feeling uninspired between the sheets? Try these simple passion boosters and put the sizzle back into your sex life

If getting busy in the bedroom is on par with cleaning the oven on your list of priorities, you're not alone. Low libido is the most common sexual complaint from women. A lack of interest in sex even has a technical name: hypoactive sexual desire disorder.

But one study has found that 80 per cent of women older than 30 believe an active sex life is important for our sense of wellbeing.* So what's holding us back?

According to naturopath Kylie Seaton, many of us are too stressed for sex. "We need the neurotrans-

mitters dopamine, GABA, serotonin and acetylcholine for desire, arousal and orgasm. Providing the body with the nutrients it needs for the maintenance of brain chemistry during periods of stress will help keep libido stable."

We've all heard of those tried-and-tested ways to get our groove back, such as sharing a saucy fantasy with your partner, sex toys, and role playing or even getting busy alfresco. But here are some ways to put the "oo" back into bedroom that you mightn't have thought of...

80%
of us think sex is a
healthy
part of life*

1 HIT THE HERBS Ancient herbal remedies are an increasingly popular way to boost libido. "Women love herbs that enhance their sexual experiences by decreasing stress, anxiety and depression, and enhancing mood," says Seaton. Try Shatavari, Verbena, Withania, oats and St John's wort.

2 OUTSOURCE If you wanted to learn how to cook Indian food or ride a motorcycle, you'd go to an expert – but did you know you can take sex lessons, too? Sexual surrogates are "therapists" who engage in intimate relations – including sex – with their clients in an effort to banish bedroom problems. Because it's controversial – critics argue it's prostitution disguised as therapy – surrogates can be difficult to track down, but a reputable sex therapist may be able to point you in the right direction. Visit the Australian Society of Sex Educators, Researchers and Therapists website to find out more (www.assertnsw.org.au).

3 THINK ABOUT YOUR THYROID An underactive thyroid is a sure-fire desire killer – and can also cause weight gain – so see your GP for a simple thyroid function blood test.

4 BRING THE BEEF They say the way to a man's heart is through his stomach, but a juicy steak could also be something of an aphrodisiac for women. Fatigue is a common cause of low libido and it's often due to low iron levels. A diet rich in lean red meat, fish, shellfish, nuts, leafy greens and legumes can help boost your intake.

5 GO OFF THE MAP Sure, your partner may know his way around the obvious touch-me-there spots, but when was the last time he went exploring? Sex therapist Christina Spaccavento says the body has plenty of pleasure points that many of us aren't familiar with. Insides of the wrists, anyone? "Have you explored your every nook and cranny? Using a finger, hand, feather or vibrator, women can explore their bodies on their own or with a partner," explains Spaccavento.