

Just the Facts: The Female Sexual Response Cycle

The human sexual response is pretty similar for females and males. There are two major physiological changes that occur in both sexes. The first is the flow of the blood into the genitals and the breast in females. The second is an increase in neuromuscular tension. There are four phases that both male and females experience in the sexual response cycle. They are the excitement phase, the plateau phase, the orgasm phase, and the resolution phase. Researchers have found that not only do these phases apply to sexual intercourse but also to other types of sexual activity.

The first phase is the excitement phase. The excitement phase is when we start feeling that first little bit of arousal. This phase can be brought on by physical contact, our thoughts, or our emotions. In this phase you and your partner will experience increased muscular tension, increased heart rate, and your blood pressure will rise. This is the phase when the male will become erect and the female's clitoris will begin swelling. Women's nipples will start to harden and stand erect in this phase.

The second phase is the plateau phase. The plateau phase is when our blood flow increases to our genitals to prepare us for orgasm. Also our blood pressure and muscle tension increases even more. In this stage our breathing becomes more rapid and heavier. At this point, the man's testes will swell and he will start to leak fluid. Be careful because the fluid that he leaks in this stage contains live sperm cells. In this phase the women's vagina will swell and the increase of blood flow will further engorge the area. Our excitement builds steady in the plateau phase.

The third phase is the orgasm phase. The orgasm phase is when our muscles contract and a sudden discharge is released. This is the shortest phase of all four phases. The orgasm phase is the highest point of our sexual pleasure. Orgasms usually last longer for women than men. It is normal for a woman to have multiple orgasms during one cycle.

The fourth and last phase is the resolution phase. The resolution phase is when our body returns to an un aroused state. In this phase men experience what is called a "refractory period". A refractory period means the man cannot have another orgasm during this time. The refractory period can last anywhere from ten minutes to several hours, it all depends on each individual. Women do not have refractory periods and can experience another orgasm right away. All in all, each and everyone of us will have a unique sexual experience. Each one of us can be aroused by different things at different times, but the phases will always remain the same.