

# HIGHS AND LOWS: SEXUAL DISTRESS IN COUPLES WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF SEXUAL DESIRE

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## Discrepancy in Dyadic Sexual Desire Predicts Sexual Distress over Time in a Community Sample of Committed Couples: A Daily Diary and Longitudinal Study

Jean-Francois Jodouin <sup>1</sup>, Natalie O Rosen <sup>2 3</sup>, Kathleen Merwin <sup>2</sup>, Sophie Bergeron <sup>4</sup>

Affiliations + expand

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*Scroll to see  
what we found!*



Even though sex is known to be beneficial to romantic relationships, many couples in report that they are **unsatisfied** with their sex lives.

Even though **sexual distress** is common for couples who experience sexual issues and that **SDD is the most frequently reported issue**, there is **little research** examining how they are related.



# WE WANTED TO KNOW:



1

How are SDD and sexual distress *related*?

2

Which factors lead to *greater* distress?

n=217

We recruited  
diverse couples  
in committed  
relationships



We asked couples to report on  
their **own** sexual desire and  
sexual distress daily, for 35  
days, and again 12-months  
after they enrolled in the study

# WE FOUND THAT...

When couples had higher than average SDD on one day it predicted **higher than average sexual distress** on the next day for **both** partners

## AND.....

..... They found the **same association** when comparing SDD at the beginning of the study with sexual distress 12-months later



# So, what does all of this mean?



These findings may contribute to interventions and education for couples who experience SDD.





Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Model (IERM) suggests that when couples experience sexual difficulties, they may use **less-optimal strategies** to deal with their negative emotions: which can result in **negative outcomes** like sexual distress

When applying the IERM, SDD may result in couples using strategies like conflict instead of greater communication. Our findings can be applied to treatments that focus on **increasing emotion communication** for couples coping with SDD **instead** of increasing sexual desire or **aligning** desire for the couple





## **This is a summary of our published article:**

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