



# Sexual Health

## WINTER WELLNESS

### SEXUALITY

**Weather can have a major impact on our health and well-being. Freezing temperatures can influence our thoughts and decisions without us realising it. Science has found it can affect everything from diminished our sexual urge to our susceptibility of developing migraines.**

Below are a **FEW** ways how cold weather can affect us physiologically and psychologically

#### Physical Effects

##### **Migraines**

The research is not concrete, but there's an exceptionally high number of migraines cases during the winter months. Extremes in weather, like big swings in temperature and barometric pressure, can influence the likelihood of a migraine, according to the Cleveland Clinic. This effect occurs more in people who are prone to migraine and tension-type headaches.

Although the association between temperature and headache is not fully understood, one researcher hypothesised these headaches may be linked to blood vessel and circulatory changes, which cold weather might aggravate.

##### **Heart Complications**

The cold weather can lead to a vast increase in heart complications. The cold air makes the body work overtime, especially the lungs and the heart. Cold temperature is known to raise blood pressure, and also increase levels of certain proteins that could increase the risk for blood clots.

When the weather is cold, the heart must also work harder to maintain body heat, and the arteries tighten, which restricts blood flow and the

oxygen supply to the heart. All these factors could trigger a heart attack, especially in the elderly, or those with existing heart disease.

#### Mental Effects

##### **Depression, But Less Violent**

The link between winter and depression is seen in patients who suffer from seasonal affective disorder (SAD). This could be attributed to several reasons, such as the decrease in sunlight may disrupt the body's internal clock, leading to feelings of depression; reduced sunlight can lead to a drop in serotonin levels, and trigger depression; or the change in season can disrupt the balance of the body's level of melatonin, which plays a role in sleep patterns and mood, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Meanwhile, violent thoughts tend to decrease during the winter time, while levels of violence and aggression are higher in hot climates, according to a recent study in Behavioural and Brain Science.

##### **Boost Creativity**

Various types of creativity can occur, depending whether we feel hot or cold. In a 2014 study published in Acta Psychologica, researchers found people who were given a heated therapeutic pad, a hot cup of tea, or who were in a warm room, were better at creative drawing, categorizing objects, and thinking of gift ideas for others. Meanwhile, those in the cold were better at identifying metaphors, thinking of new pasta names, and planning abstract gift ideas. The researchers hypothesize warmth helps people feel psychologically connected and more generous to while the cold may stimulate referential, or cold precessing, as people are more likely to feel distant from others.



## Low Sex Drive

Winter time means we're less likely to have a higher sex drive. The body's testosterone products naturally declines from MARCH till SEPTEMBER, and then rises steadily through the spring and summer with a peak in FEBRUARY. This is why reproductive rates increase, with the month Of Febuary showing the highest rate of conception.

A study conducted by the University of Tasmania suggests our ancestors' hibernation patterns are to blame for the drop in libido. "Hibernation caused their metabolisms to slow and sex drives to wane, as they increased their calorie load and slept more," said Dr. Margaret Austen, co-author of the study.

DO you feel like snuggling into a warm quilt instead of your partner, during cold winter nights? If so, then your libido may need a little boost. Remember, the food we eat impacts our health. So, try these winter foods to enhance your sex life.

## Strawberries

Strawberries have been known to be aphrodisiacs and have been commonly used during foreplay. But these luscious red berries are also high in B vitamins and folate, which help prevent birth defects. They are also high in vitamin C, which gives them libido boosting properties. They also contain a compound that helps relax the blood vessels and improves circulation, thereby creating a natural viagra-like-effect.

## Pumpkin seeds

Pumpkin seeds are full of zinc, which helps pump up the female sex drive and elevates the levels of testosterone in men. They are also rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which benefit a healthy libido. Other than that they also include nutrients like selenium and vitamin E, which are good for the arteries.

## Sweet Potatoes

In African cultures, sweet potatoes have been part of many fertility therapies and estrogen replacement therapies to boost one's sex drive. They are packed with potassium, which helps prevent high

blood pressure, thereby reducing one's chance of any risks associated with erectile dysfunction.

## Pomegranates

This red fruit has long been known to be a super-food but it can be a sexual stimulant too. Drinking pomegranate juice can bring about a notable surge in testosterone levels, which further increases libido in both men and women. This fruit has also been known to cure erectile dysfunction and regulate circulation.

## Apples

Apples contain phenylethylamine (PEA) that make you feel naturally excited and happy. Phenylethylamine is the same ingredient present in chocolate and releases a feel-good chemical in the body. Apart from that, apples also contain quercetin, a flavonoid that helps prevent prostate cancer.

## Wear Red

Winter can affect what we wear, specifically what colour we choose, but during a certain time of the month. A 2014 study in PLOS ONE found women are more prone to wearing red or pink on days when they're ovulating, specifically in the winter. Although the link remains unclear, researchers hypothesise red and pink exude sex appeal in the winter, a time where women are limited to the ways they can dress seductively. The red-dress effect can be moderated by current climate changes, and does provide further evidence that under certain circumstances, red and pink is reliably linked to female fertility.

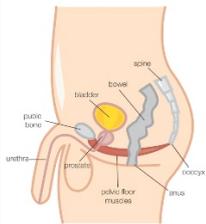


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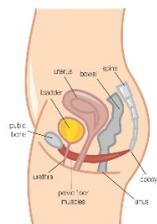


## What are pelvic floor muscles?

**Pelvic floor muscles are the layer of muscles that support the pelvic organs, as shown below in women (right) and men (left).**



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## What do they do?

- Provide support to the organs that lie on it and help us control our bladder and bowel. Weakened pelvic floor muscles mean the internal organs are not fully supported and you may have difficulty controlling the release of urine, faeces (poo) or flatus (wind).
- Important for sexual function in men and women. In men, it is important for erectile function and ejaculation. In women, voluntary contractions (squeezing) of the pelvic floor contribute to sexual sensation and arousal.
- During pregnancy, they provide support for the baby and assist in the birthing process.
- Work with the abdominal and back muscles to stabilise and support the spine.

## What can make these muscles loose?

- Pregnancy and childbirth for women
- Straining on the toilet
- Chronic coughing
- Heavy lifting
- High impact exercise

Pelvic floor muscle exercises can help with:

- improving control over bladder and bowel function
- reducing the risk of prolapse ('sagging' of internal organs)
- better recovery from childbirth and surgery (in women)
- better recovery after prostate surgery
- increased sexual sensation and orgasmic potential, and
- increased social confidence and quality of life

If you are having trouble correctly identifying or activating your pelvic floor muscles, please see a pelvic floor/women's health physiotherapist.

[www.continence.org.au](http://www.continence.org.au).



**Shanee Fleischer,  
Physiotherapist**



## The Tao of Sex Wisdom

**The ancient Chinese Tao philosophy teaches us how to achieve eternal youth, health and happiness by practicing The Tao of Sex Wisdom.**

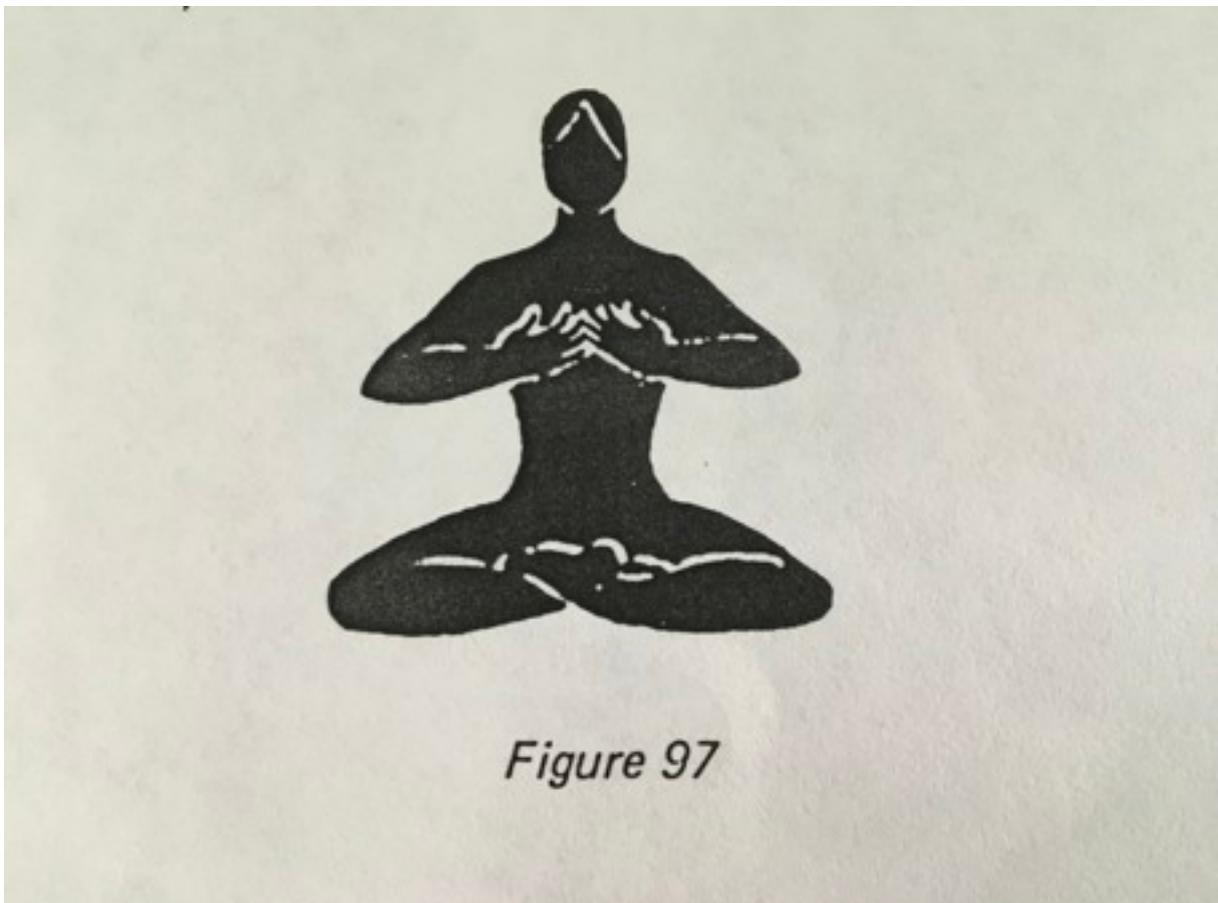
Taoists have understood that the body's seven glands are the energy centers which are responsible for regulating the flow of energy within various systems of the body.

These seven glands are: the pineal, the pituitary, the thyroid, the thymus, the pancreas, the adrenals, the sexual glands. They may be visualised as vessels which are attached to one another and depend on each other. If one is drained, each of the other would give up of it's

supply. Our task is to increase the energy so we can reverse the weakness and heal ourselves.

The sexual glands, the prostate and testes in males, and the ovaries, vagina and the breasts in the females - are responsible for hormonal secretions, sexual energy and response and reproduction. Taoists refer to the sexual glands as the "stove". A stove must have fire inside. The sexual hormones are the body's fire that supports all the other glands.

The Deer Exercise for women contains instructions that stimulate the production of estrogen and can greatly relieve eliminate the problems related to period. eg. emotional ups and downs, water retention and abnormal flow.



*Figure 97*



## Instructions for the Women's Deer Exercise

As you do the two steps of this exercise, visualise the fire or energy coming from the lower sexual gland and rising upward along the spine into the breast and to the head.

The mind is used as it influences and facilitates the movement of blood and energy.

Linking mind and body at the same focus is a prerequisite to the harmonious and powerful function of vital energy. Bringing this energy to the pineal gland in a head which is associated with intuition and conscience is the Divine purpose.

### First stage

This exercise can be done sitting on a floor or on a bed.

1. Sit so that you can place the heel of one foot so that it presses into and up against the opening of your vagina. You will want a steady and fairly firm pressure so that the heel presses tightly against the clitoris. If it is not possible to place your foot in this position, then use a fairly hard, round object such as baseball. (You may experience a pleasant sensation due to the stimulation of the genital area and the subsequent release of sexual energy).

2. Rub your hands together vigorously. This will create heat in your hands by bringing the energy of your body into your palms and fingers.

3. Place your hands on your breasts so that you feel the heat from your hands enter into the skin.

4. Rub your breasts in an outward, circular motion, moving very slowly. Your right hand will move counter-clockwise and your left hand clockwise.

5. Rub in this circular manner for a minimum of thirty six times or a maximum of three hundred and sixty times.

### Second stage

1. First, tighten the muscles of your vagina and anus as if you were trying to close both openings, and then try to draw your rectum upward inside the body, further contracting the anal muscles. When done properly, this will feel as if the air is being drawn up into your rectum and vagina. Hold these muscles tight for as long as you can comfortably.

2. Relax and repeat the anal and vaginal contractions. Do this as many times as feels comfortable.



Zhanna Khortik  
Massage/Beauty Therapist

## Supporting MS

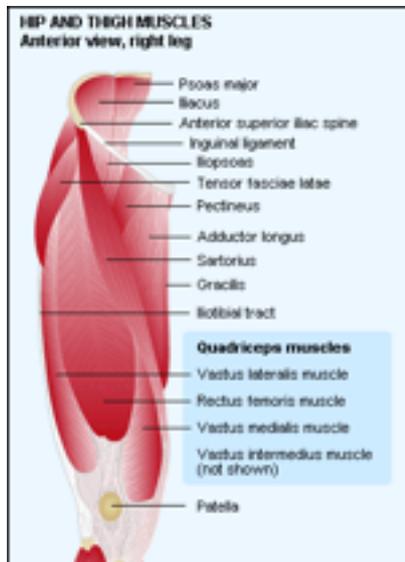
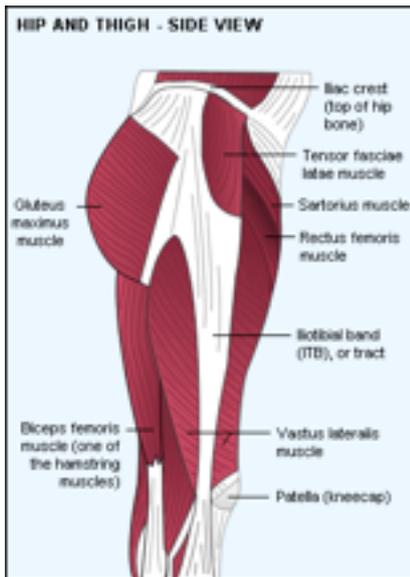
**Our great team headed to Albert Park Lake on the 3rd June to walk 5kms in support of MS. Thanks to everyone who supported us on the day. It was a wonderful and sunny day!!!!**





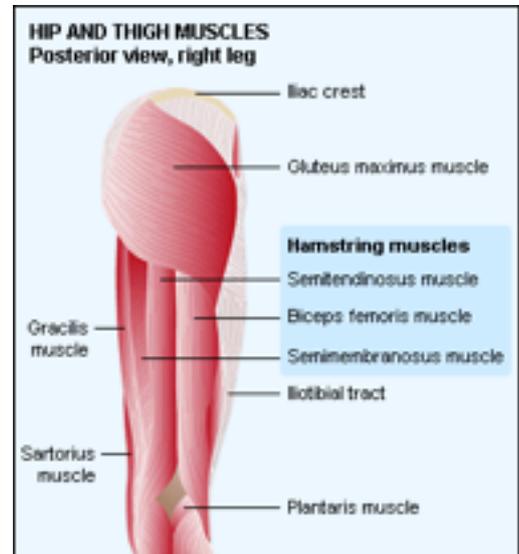
## The Hip Joint

**Your hip joint is a major joint in the body that links our torso to your lower limbs. The strength and endurance in the muscles of the hip are important for stability and posture of the spine and pelvis and also movement.**



Without stability and strength it is common to experience common conditions such as lower back pain, pubic/groin pain, hip pain and knee pain. The images below show how the muscles of the hip cross over the joint and also play in the movement of other areas such as the knee, lower back and pelvis. This is why it is common to, at time

experience a confusion to where the pain is exactly coming from when your practitioner is looking at your hip/pelvis/lower back complex.



Some of my favourite hip exercises I get my patients to do are:

1. Bridges
2. Clams
3. Wall sits (hold for 2 mins take breaks as needed and build up to a full hold)
4. Lunges
5. Lateral lunges
6. Semi squat side steps with Theraband strapped around thigh
7. Step up

All exercises should be modified to the patients progression and needs as sometimes their injuries may not allow them to do some of the above. Speak to your practitioner if you have an concerns.



**Daniella Zampierollo, Osteopath**

images: <http://www.mydr.com.au/sports-fitness/hip-and-thigh/7/6/2018>