

## Questions and Answers on Sex

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*These Questions and Answers explain the Islamic perspective of sex and sexuality such as the aim of marriage. It also looks at the Islamic guidelines which could assist in upholding sexual morality between spouses. This discussion reveals that Islam considers sex as an important human need that should be properly satisfied. Moreover, Islam does not treat it as distasteful, filthy or heinous. "Zina" not only a great sin but also a cause of destruction of wealth, health and reputation. It is recommended that Muslims should marry as early as they are able to. Muslims should not fear poverty, nor should they apprehend increase of family members as a result of marriage, and thus, stay away from marriage. The topic of sex is considered a major taboo in Eastern societies and Muslims normally avoid discussing it. An important Hadith has been related from Khuzaimah (ra) in this regard:*

*"For revealing the truth and matters of Shariah, Haya is not required".*

*Sex as taboo creates confusion and the younger generation especially is unaware of the subject in the light of Shariah. Saving Muslims from the curse of illegal sex is a great challenge today, and trying to enlighten them is actually a form of Jih'ad. Youngsters nowadays are asking about these matters and it is not only Sunnah but a duty to spread the Talim of Islam. Our religion covers all aspects of human life, including sexual relationship between spouses. How is it then possible that in the Shariah, answers of the current era's problems are not available? May Allah forgive me by the Wasilah of "ibadeh'il Lazinastafa" for any errors that may be.*

*Surah 86, Ayah 6-7 deals with the topic of sex:*

*He is created from spurting water... from between the backbone and the ribs.*

*(In the spinal cord and in the brain is the directive energy of the nervous system, and this directs all actions, organic and psychic). If people find discussing this topic disgusting, they should know that during the era of Rasulullah (S) even women were not hesitant to ask questions on these matters. Worth reiterating that one should not be shy in inquiring about sexual matters as educating oneself about the injunctions of Islam is pertinent. One of the wives of Rasulullah(S) testified:*

*"Blessed are the women of the Ans'ar as shyness did not stand in their way of seeking the Talim of Islam."*

Moreover, Amir al-Mumineen Ali (as) warned against failing to acquire knowledge because of being inhibited:

*“None of you should feel shy in learning what you do not know.”*

*The increasing spread of sexual diseases in Muslim countries is a matter of shame. This curse is the result of the blind following of the alien ideologies and philosophies. The promiscuous free-sex culture has resulted in diseases like AIDS and Hepatitis. Only a single illegal sexual relation is enough to ruin one’s or their child’s health forever. All societies which neglect the concept of morality and chastity suffer from diseases spiritual, physical and mental. Parents should first learn and then teach their children the culture and history of Islam. Suitable sex education can only be given if the correct messages are being sent explicitly and properly by parents.*

*A broad minded atmosphere is the need of the time as rigidity creates suffocation and pollution. Attitude of the parents plays a vital role in building the character of their children. It is necessary that in the presence of children, the parents act with each other with decency. It is the responsibility of parents to monitor the activities of their offspring. They should teach them in such a manner that they understand what is right and wrong or legal and illegal. Liberty could be given to the children but surely with certain reservations and under supervision. Parents should explain their kids not to engage in pre-marital sex and the consequences of not following this advice. They need to frequently discuss topics like menstruation, ejaculation, sexual changes in adolescents and Taharah. If you feels uncomfortable discussing these topics with your child, take the help of your dearest ones who can communicate the teachings of Islam to your child. The community institutions can be helpful in this regard in terms of providing a healthy space of interaction with religious scholars.*

*Furthermore, it is a requirement to offer pre-marriage sex education to teenage boys and girls to prepare them for their future as they themselves will be parents one day. If parents are to fulfil this responsibility, they must be well-versed with the subject and Shariah commandments themselves.*

**Here is a reproduction of some of the frequently-asked questions and my answers to them:**

**Q. 1).** *How is the act of masturbation seen in Islam? Is it a sin? If it is, then what is the punishment for it?*

**Ans.** *Masturbation (for both genders) is an unpleasant act on the basis of the following Ayah:*

*“And those who guard their chastity (i.e. private parts from illegal sexual acts) except from their wives or (the captives and slaves) that their right hands possess – for them, they are free from blame. But whoever seeks beyond that and then those are the transgressors.” 23.5-7.*

*Here the Ayah is clear in forbidding all illegal sexual acts (including masturbation). And whoever seeks beyond that is the transgressor.*

*“And let those who find not the financial means for Nikah keep themselves chaste, until Allah enriches them of His bounty.” 24.33.*

This Ayah also clearly orders that whoever does not have the financial means to do Nikah to keep himself chaste, he should be patient in facing temptations (including masturbation) until Allah enriches them of His bounty. A Hadith says:

*“O young people! Whoever among you can do Nikah should do it because it helps him lower his gaze and guard his modesty (i.e. his private parts from committing illegal sexual intercourse etc.), and whoever is not able to do Nikah should keep Sawm as it diminishes his sexual desire”.*

- i. A permanent and quick cure from this problem lies in Nikah as soon as the person is able, as shown in the Hadith.
- ii. There is conflicting literature on some medical symptoms arising from masturbation such as weak eyesight, weak nervous system, and/or back pain. More importantly, feelings of guilt and anxiety can be complicated by missing Faraid because of the need to shower after every incidence of masturbation.
- iii. Thinking that masturbation is permissible because it prevents one from committing illegal sexual acts such as fornication or even homosexuality is wrong.
- iv. Trying to follow the recommendation of Rasulallah (S) concerning the etiquette of getting ready for bed, such as reading Dua, sleeping on the right side, and avoiding sleeping on the belly as Rasulallah (S) forbade it.
- v. Observe moderation in eating and drinking in order to avoid stimulating desire. Refrain from anything that is sexually stimulating, such as pornographic pictures, erotic films and songs.
- vi. Avoid gatherings and places that bring men and women physically close to each other.
- vii. Avoid sleeping on beds that are so soft that they make one think about sex.

**Q. 2).** What is the Sawab in sexual intercourse with the spouse and how is this action a source of Ajar?

**Ans.** When a Muslim man has sexual intercourse with his wife in the legal manner and then wishes to return another time, for Saw'ab he should first perform Wudoo, as recommended by the Hadith:

*When one of you comes to his wife and then wishes to perform (sexual intercourse) another time, let him perform Wudoo between the two times.*

*Rasulullah (S) declared Ajar of Sadaqah for legal sexual intercourse by spouses. Once a question was raised by Ash'ab (ra) and Rasulallah (S) explained:*

*“If one acts unlawfully, he would be punished; likewise, if one acts lawfully, he would be rewarded.”*

*Rasulullah(S) stated that in one's sexual closeness with their life-partner, there is Sadaqah (Ibadah through giving): He(S) explained:*

*In the sexual act of each of you there is a Sadaqah.*

*The Ash'ab questioned:*

*O Rasulallah(S)! When one of us fulfils his sexual desire, will he be given a reward for that?*

*Rasulullah(S) explained:*

*Do you not think that were he to act upon it unlawfully, he would be sinning? Likewise, if he acts upon it lawfully he will be rewarded. (Muslim)*

What's more, a reward equal to Sadaqah (voluntary charity) is recorded for them every time spouses copulate. Sayyidna Abu Dharr (ra) transmitted that some of the Ash'ab asked: O Rasulallah (S)! The rich among us have taken the rewards (of the Akhirah)! They offer Salaat as we offer Salaat, keep Sawm as we keep Sawm and then they give charity from the excess of their wealth!

Rasulallah(S) granted Barakah and said:

Did Allah not make for you that from which you can give Sadaqah? Verily for every time you say Subhan Allah there is a Sadaqah, and for every time you say Allahu Akbar there is a Sadaqah, and for every time you say Al Hamdulillah there is Sadaqah, and in every act of enjoining what is right there is Sadaqah, and in every act of forbidding what is wrong there is a Sadaqah, and in your sexual relations (between spouses) there is a Sadaqah.

Rasulallah(S) continued:

In the same way when one satisfies his wife with that which is Halal (lawful) for him, there is a reward.

**Q. 3).** Can spouses enjoy Ghusul [bath] together?

**Ans.** It is permissible for the husband and wife to bathe together in the same place even though he sees her private parts, and she sees his. A Hadith established:

Guard your nakedness except from your wife or those whom your right hand possesses Hence it is permissible for both spouses to look at and touch the body of their companion, including their private parts. It is best for the husband and wife not to sleep or eat or drink after having sex until they first perform Ghusul.

**Q. 4).** Is oral sex permissible between spouses?

**Ans.** Oral sex is an act whereby the man or the woman touch and kiss their partner's sexual organs with their mouth. There is no clear prohibition about oral sex in the Qur'an or the Sunnah. Fiqah is silent on this issue. No one asked Rasulallah (S) about this issue, nor did he ever mention anything about it. Therefore, one cannot say it is Har'am, as long as it is practiced between the husband and wife. Oral sex can be done in a way that no filth is involved, although Muttaqi people express Karahat on it. I understand that semen is Najis (impure) but other liquids a man releases do not fall under this category. These are of three types:

1. Mazi: a liquid which is discharged during foreplay.
2. Wazi: a liquid which comes out after the discharge of semen.
3. Wadi: a liquid which comes out after urinating.

All these discharges are not Najis.

**Note:** As for Wazi and Wadi, they will be considered Tahir if he has done Istibra'. If he has not done Istibra', then he must consider it Najis. Istibra is a recommended act for men after urination. Its purpose to ensure that no more urine is left in the urethra. There are certain ways of performing Istibra, and the best of them is that after the passing of urine, if the anus also becomes Najis it should be cleaned first. Thereafter, the part between the anus and the root of penis should be pressed thrice with the left hand. Then the thumb should be placed on the penis,

and the forefinger below it be pressed three times up to the point of circumcision. The front part of the penis then should be jerked three times. Istibra is not meant for women, and if she sees any liquid and she doubts whether it is urine, that liquid is Tahir, and it will not invalidate Wudu and Ghusl.

**Q. 5).** Can the husband and wife share their private experiences among friends?

**Ans.** No! Rasulallah(S) expressed displeasure and declared this practice as shameful, obscene, and a sign of illiteracy. He (S) warned:

Among those who will be in the worst position in Allah's sight on the Day of Resurrection is the man who has intercourse with his wife, and she with him, and then spreads her secret. This law is applicable equally upon the women too.

**Q. 6).** How can a husband please and satisfy his wife?

**Ans.** It is important for a man to realise that women are not all the same, and are individual living beings. The love of a wife for a husband has nothing to do with the size or shape of his genitals. Moreover, Fuqha (Jurists) believed that a woman's private parts need "protection" (Tahsin). What they meant was that it was important for a husband to satisfy his wife's sexual needs so that she would not be tempted to commit Zina out of despair or frustration. The wife is not merely a lump of flesh without emotions or feelings, and isn't there just to satisfy a man's urges. On the contrary, her body contains a soul no less important in Allah's sight than her husband's. Her heart is very tender and delicate, and crude or rough manners would hurt her feelings and drive away love. The husband would be both foolish and immoral to act in any way unpalatable to her natural temperament, and a man seeking his own satisfaction without considering that of his wife is a selfish boor. In fact, according to a Hadith:

Three things are counted as inadequacies in a man.

**i).** Firstly, meeting someone he would like to get to know, and taking leave of him before learning his name and his family's.

**ii).** Secondly, denial of the generosity that another shows to him.

And thirdly, going to his wife and having intercourse with her before talking to her and gaining her understanding, satisfying his need from her before she has satisfied her need from him.

This is another of the things implied by the saying that one's wife is "A tilth unto you." (Qur'an, 2:223)

**Q. 7).** Why is sexual intercourse Har'am during the days of menses?

**Ans.** Mating should not take place during menses because if pregnancy arises, the child would suffer from leprosy or other major diseases. One of the reasons for this has been stated by Rasulallah (S). If a husband committed this act and after that a child bearing white spots or leprosy is born, he should not blame or hold responsible anybody but himself. The other reason is that during menses impure blood enters the penis which causes sexual diseases. Due to this

*harmful effect and for this reason clear instructions have been given in Ayat 222 of Surah al-Baqarah.*

*(O Rasul) they (people) ask you about menstruation, tell them that it is a period of discomfort (for the women). Therefore, don't establish sexual relation with them during the menses and don't approach them (sexually) until the blood stops and they have become clean.*

*Therefore, the husband is not allowed to engage in sexual intercourse with his wife until she purifies herself by taking Ghusul after her menstruation stops because the Qur'an educates in Surah al-Baqarah-2, Ayah 222:*

*....When they [i.e. the wives] have cleansed themselves [after menstruation], you go into them as Allah has commanded to you...*

*Menses quicken the flow of blood in a woman due to which impure substances are ejected from the female genitalia in a large quantity. Due to this reason the woman feels uncomfortable. The woman who does not clean her body by regular bath would suffer from skin diseases, kidney trouble, cough and cold.*

*However, it must be noted that like other religions, Islam did not declare women undergoing menses a source of dirt. Rasulallah(S) guides:*

*Be with them in the house, and do everything except for intercourse.*

**Q. 8).** *Can a spouse deny or delay sexual intimacy for Ibadat?*

**Ans.** *According to Abu Saad, Rasulallah (S) once warned the wife of Safwan Ibn al-Muattal for being overly-pious to the detriment of her Nikah. She used to read long Surats during her night Salaat keeping her husband waiting, and she took Nafil Siy'am frequently without concern for her husband which made her tired and prevented any opportunity for copulation during the day (sexual activity in day time is forbidden only in Ramadan). Rasulallah (S) ruled in favour of the husband and recommended that she should recite short Surahs and take Sawm with the consent of her husband only. Similarly, when Rasulallah (S) heard that Abdallah Ibn Amr spent his night in Salaat and stayed in Siy'am, he instructed him to maintain balance in his Ibadat and Riyazat, pointing out:*

*Your eye has a right over you, your guests have a right over you, and your wife has a right over you.*

*This Hadith should be taken seriously. Many Muslim wives know the pain of loneliness, while their husbands are away, or frequently stay out late with their friends. Other times they might be busy in ibadah till the wee hours, or fail to come to bed until the wife is already asleep, or is so tired that she is no longer interested. It is a Sunnah to leave the Masjid and return home after the Salaat al-Eshaa. Being early to bed and early rising is also a Sunnah as every day is a new day, and it is never too late to make a fresh start and put things right. A Hadith informs:*

*Taubah of a Muslim is accepted until he gives the death-rattle.*

**Q. 9).** *Can the spouse refuse or reject their partner for sex?*

**Ans.** *It is explained in the Fiqh that the husband has a right upon his wife. Islam commands not only women but also men in this regard that they must fulfil their natural desires within the confines of Nikah. It is a duty of the wife as well as the husband to be aware of the urges and needs of their partner. Otherwise either will be committing a sin like Zina. Hence neither should reject the other, unless one has a legally valid reason.*

*Rasulullah (S) warned:*

*If the husband calls his wife to bed (to meet sexually) and she refuses and causes him to sleep in anger, Malaek will send Laanah upon her till morning.*

*According to another Hadith:*

*If a woman spends the night leaving her husband's bed (does not please him), Malaek send Laanah upon her till she comes back (to her husband).*

*Now, it is fairly easy for a wife to satisfy her husband and make herself available to him, even if she is not really in the mood. It is far harder for a husband to satisfy his wife if he is not in the mood, and this is where an important aspect of male responsibility needs to be brought to every Muslim man's attention, and stressed strongly.*

**Q. 10).** *A gentleman asked that sometimes he thinks of going out and searching for sex workers due to his non-responding wife.*

**Ans.** *Perform Istaghf'ar, remember death and imagine Az'ab of the grave. Follow the path of Taqwa which increases reward. Show your wife the above authentic Ahadith regarding the Laanah of Malaek on the woman who refuses her husband's invitation to get physically intimate. It may be that she fears Allah, and her attitude towards copulating with you might change. If her attitude does not change, you are well within your rights to seek another wife but do it within the boundaries prescribed by the Shariah, and honour and enter into Nikah with another woman. In this regard, the Qur'an warns in Ayah 32 of Surah al Israa:  
Do not even go near Zina for it is extremely indecent and a very evil way!*

**Q. 11).** *Sexual gratification has no limit; how should one control it?*

**Ans.** *An important aspect of present day's problems is sexual gratification. Once Rasulallah (S) saw a woman who charmed him so he immediately approached his wife Saudah, who was busy wearing a perfume in the company of her friends. Her friends then left. He then satisfied himself with Saudah and said:*

*If a man sees a woman who charms him, he should go to his wife, for she has the same sources of satisfying him as the other woman.*

*Today we are constantly exposed to sensual material, electronically as well as physically, therefore, it is absolutely necessary that the partners respect each other's feelings. Negligence by the wife or the husband can have harmful effects on the happiness of the family.*

**Q. 12).** *Why can't a wife refuse her husband for sex when she doesn't feel like it?*

**Ans.** *Rasulullah(S) informed:*

*If a husband calls his wife to his bed (i.e. to have sexual relation) and she refuses and causes him to sleep in anger, the Malaek will curse her till morning.*

*No matter how busy the wife is, Rasulallah(S) advised that when she is called to bed by her husband, she must leave everything and enjoy what Allah has made permissible for the believers in marriage. If a wife is not satisfying the natural needs of her husband because of abnormal appetite or any other reason, it would be best for the husband to talk to her politely, and explain his needs to her. If the husband feels that he cannot have patience and fears that he may transgress the boundaries of Allah if the situation does not improve, he always has the option of marrying a second, a third, or a fourth time. However, the husband must also take into consideration his wife's disposition if she falls sick or is pregnant, or is in grief, and strive to keep their relation in harmony and avoid any discord. Similarly, if the wife invites her husband to bed he should not refuse either since women have physical needs as well.*

**Q. 13).** *Is it necessary for the wife to fulfil even unlawful desire(s) of her husband?*

**Ans.** *The wife's obedience of the husband is conditional; he is to be obeyed as long as he is within the limits of the Shariah. A Hadith guides:*

*There is no obedience to people in the Creators' disobedience.*

*If the husband forces his wife to not observe the Faraid of Islam like Salaat, Sawm of Ramadan, Zakaat, Haj, among others then she should not obey her husband's instructions. Ayah 189 of Surah al-Air'af guides us towards this. A religious advice is Wajib that if any Muslim lady is forced by her husband to fulfil his unnatural desire to have anal sex, she should refuse him. It is not necessary for the wife to obey the husband when he goes against the Qur'an and Sunnah because that is a great sin.*

**Q. 14).** *What are the instructions regarding anal intercourse?*

**Ans.** *Sexual relations among humans are quite delicate. The Qur'an not only takes into consideration the physical sensuality but also makes certain that man should rise above the animalistic level and temper his sensual urges with moral and spiritual discipline. Even the language used to provide the essential guidance in this connection has been very carefully worded so as not to let the issue be described in a lewd style (the literary way and techniques of the then Arabi poets). Women are compared to cultivated land. The real purpose of the conjugal union should be for the reproduction of human life for the service of Lord. Anal intercourse is Har'am, even if both partners agree to it. Mutual consent to a Har'am deed does not make it Halal. It is strictly unlawful for the couple to engage in sodomy, as Rasulallah(S) warned: Cursed is the one who comes to his wife in her anus.*



*A man asked Ibn Abbas (ra) about engaging in sodomy with his wife. He replied: This man is asking me about Kufur. Rasulallah(S) then responded:*

*Whoever has intercourse [with his wife] during her menses, or commits sodomy with her, or comes to a soothsayer, he is a disbeliever.*

*Women have the right to refuse to comply with their husband's demands even against the threat of divorce. Some men lie to their wives who are shy to ask the religious scholars about this matter. They may tell them that it is allowed, and might even present them with this Ayah from the Qur'an, which in no way gives consent for anal sex:*

*Your women are cultivated land for you, so enter your cultivated land as you please and wish (2:223).*

*Sayyidna Qadi al-Nauman clearly instructed anal intercourse as being Har'am. In vol. 14 of Wasail, on p.104, this Hadith clarified the matter:*

*On my Ummah, the anus of their wives is Har'am.*

*A Hadith has been quoted in Tirmidi from Sayyidna Abdullah bin Abbas, who was one of the renowned students of Amir al-Mumineen Ali (as). He narrated:*

*Your wives are your Farms, therefore go to them from the front side and go to the front portion from the back side. Avoid sexual intercourse in their anus in the same manner as you avoid it during the Menses.*

*This Hadith categorically declares anal intercourse as being Har'am. The imagery is that of a farmer taking care of his field, and the vagina is like the field. The farmer sows the seed in order to reap the harvest, but he does not sow it out of season or cultivate it in a manner which will injure or exhaust the soil. The damage in this case could sometimes be irreparable because the woman, unlike a farm, is very sensitive and has emotions, feelings and strong passions which require needful satisfaction and attention in a proper and appropriate manner. This is why those who engage in anal intercourse are Maloon. The meaning of Maloon in Arabi is somebody who is far from Rahmah and Barakah in Duniya and Aakhirah, and very close to Az'ab.*

*Moreover, from the medical point of view this act is tremendously harmful. On account of anal intercourse, sexual power decreases and it may cause impotency. The wife of an impotent would naturally caste her eyes on others. It is obvious that for the fulfilment of her desire she would be inclined to seek someone else. It is a natural urge that when a hungry person is not able to fill his stomach by a lawful source, he then approaches illegal means. May Allah protect us and save our family. The science of medicine agrees that this act is unclean, unhealthy, and is one of the causes of the incurable disease Aids.*

*Among the causes of this crime is to infiltrate the pure marital life with filthy habits of forbidden perverted acts inherited from the times of Jahiliyah. The seriousness of this sin is such that that Rasulallah(S) compared it to Shirk. If a person commits this sin out of ignorance of the rule of Shariah, then they are not to be blamed, however, if they commit it intentionally, there is a penalty. Furthermore, homosexual activity in males can cause infertility. This means that the man becomes childless.*

**Q.15).** *Can a husband consume the milk of his wife while she breast feeds their baby? Is it permitted?*

**Ans.** *Touching, playing, fondling or sucking of a wife's breast is absolutely legal for the husband. If the husband tastes the milk of his wife, it has absolutely no bearing on the validity of their Nikah. A husband is allowed to take pleasure from any part of his wife's body, including her breasts. Consuming a woman's milk creates foster-relations only when an infant sucks the breast of a woman in his infancy. It should however be noted that the child has the primary right on the milk of their mother and only the remaining milk can be consumed by the husband.*

**Q.16).** *Can a Muslim follow the sex techniques of Kama Sutra?*

**Ans.** *Let us be clear that in Islam legal sex has the reward of Ibadat first and it is later considered a passion, whereas the philosophy of Kama Sutra is based upon exploitation. Islam does not allow any kind of exploitation. The best recommended style of intercourse is available in Kitab al-Tibb of Al Shaikh al-Raees, Da'i Bu Ali ibn Sina. He has explained that the worst position of mating is that of a woman on top of the man because it will later on create health disorders. Ayah 189 of Surah al-Air'af guides us towards this aptly.*

**Q.17).** *Is a medicine like Viagra Halal or Haram?*

**Ans.** *For those who may not know, Sildenafil Citrate, marketed under the name Viagra, is a prescription drug developed by Pfizer which treats erectile dysfunction which can later on lead to male impotence. Using a drug that helps sexual intercourse is permitted and there is no legal prohibition provided it does not contain ingredients that may harm health, or any intoxicating substances.*

*Note: If you're a man who uses nitrate drugs such as nitro-glycerine (drugs commonly used for the treatment of chest pains) never take Viagra with any nitrate medicine as your blood pressure could suddenly drop to an unsafe or life threatening level.*

**Q.18).** *Today transplanting sexual (reproductive) glands is very popular among the rich – what is the Shariah guidance in this regard?*

**Ans.** *Because the testicles and ovaries continue to carry and produce the genetic characteristics (DNA) of the original donor even after being transplanted into a new body, the transplantation of reproductive glands is Har'am according to the Shariah. Transplanting other parts of the sex organs which do not transmit DNA (with the exception of the private parts themselves) is permissible in case of a legitimate reason as long as the relevant rulings and regulations of Shariah are adhered to.*

**Q.19).** *Why is conjugal union prohibited in the presence of an infant?*

**Ans.** *Abi Jafar Al Imam Mohammad al-Baqir (as) cautions:*

*“Refrain from deriving sexual pleasure in places where an understanding child can see you and follow your action to such an extent that he can narrate to others what he has seen.”*

*The author of Wasa'il al-Shiah narrates a Hadith:*

*“Wallah! If a child watches a couple engaging sexually or listens to their talk or even hears their breathing sounds then such a child, whether the male or a female, will get involved in adultery at one stage or the other in his or her life.”*

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