

A Guide to Mindful Masturbation for Men

Self-practice

One activity that can develop your sensuality is self-practice (i.e. masturbation) and the sensual exploration of your own body. As a child you probably noticed it felt good when you intentionally rubbed your genitals or they accidentally rubbed against something like another person, a stream of running water, or a pillow. The expression of healthy sexual relationships between two people begins with self-pleasuring from the time of birth. For most of us, masturbation provides our first source of sexual enjoyment. It can be a lifelong source of sexual pleasure if your mind allows you to accept this. However many people associate masturbating with juvenile or sinful, inappropriate behaviour.

There are lots of myths and misinformation surrounding masturbation, and the topic tends to be shrouded in a veil of shame, guilt, and punishment. Masturbation does not cause physical problems or psychological problems. Masturbation is a self-limiting behaviour, which means you will ultimately lose interest in it and start doing something else. As long as you follow basic hygiene precautions (clean hands, toys, and so on) and have adequate lubrication, you can masturbate as often as you want. Rather than being a source of problems, masturbation is a healthy outlet for sexual desire, can reduce your risk for sexually transmitted diseases if you don't have safe sexual partners, and is an alternative to having sex with sex workers or anonymous partners.

The latest research shows that masturbating on a regular basis may decrease your risk for developing prostate cancer. In a study of 2,000 men between the ages of 20 to 50 found that the more often men ejaculated through masturbation, the less likely they were to develop prostate cancer. The prostate gland produces fluid that contributes to the make-up of semen and ejaculation, cleanses the prostate, and prevents carcinogens from building up. Men who masturbated to ejaculation had a lower incidence of prostate cancer than men who climaxed through partnered activity.

Perhaps, rather than viewing masturbation as childish behaviour and something to be avoided, this research will help you view it as an adult, prostate cancer risk-reducing behaviour. You can enhance your own sexuality by practicing mindful masturbation, which helps you learn the type and duration of genital stimulation you enjoy and require to reach orgasm. Armed with this information, you may decide to talk with your partner about what it takes to please you sexually.

A mindful masturbation exercise

Allow at least 30 uninterrupted minutes for this exercise. This will give you enough time to reach a climax and return to an un-aroused state. Turn off your telephones, television, and other distractions. When performing this activity, focus your attention on the sensations in your genitals. Focus your attention on how each motion feels. Note the thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images that accompany your actions. Whenever your thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images drift away from the present moment and into the past or the future, tell yourself: "There goes my runaway mind again, taking me out of the present moment." Just notice, accept it and get back to the task at hand.

- Lie on your back on your bed or on a mat on the floor. Make sure the room is warm enough so your muscles can relax.
- Play relaxing background music to help override distracting sounds from the outside world.
- Use warm massage oil, lotion, or a lubricating jelly and apply to the head of your penis. This not only prevents damage to your skin, it also enhances the experience by providing a warm, slippery sensation to your genitals, fingers, and hands.
- Lightly swirl the lubrication around the head of your penis with your fingertips only.
- Focus your attention on the sensations in the tip of your penis and your fingertips.
- Note the thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images that accompany your actions.
- Continue to do this for another minute or two.
- Now use your thumb and middle two fingers to swirl the lubrication around the head of your penis.
- Use your fingers to apply pressure to your circular motion. Experiment with different levels of pressure, but keep the stimulation limited to just the head of your penis.
- Focus your attention on the sensations emanating from the head of your penis and your fingertips.
- Note the thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images that accompany your actions.
- Continue to do this for another minute or two.
- Now shift your attention to the shaft of your penis, the area that extends from the head to your testicles (balls). Apply oil, lotion, or jelly on the shaft of your penis and your fingertips.
- Lightly move your fingers up and down and around the shaft of your penis with your fingertips only. Do not grab hold of your penis, just stroke with your fingertips gently.
- Focus your attention on the sensations in the shaft of your penis and your fingertips.

- Note the thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images that accompany your actions.
- Continue to do this for another minute or two.
- Put some oil, lotion, or jelly on your testicles and lightly swirl the lubrication around your testicles with your fingertips only. Focus your attention on the sensations in your testicles and your fingertips.
- Note the thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images that accompany your actions.
- Continue to do this for a minute or two.
- Now wrap your hand around your testicles and apply pressure as you knead your testicles. Experiment with different levels of pressure and the speed of your kneading motion. Focus your attention on the sensations in your entire penis and in your hand.
- Note the thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images that accompany your actions.
- Continue to do this for another minute or two.
- Apply oil, lotion, or jelly on your perineum (the area between your testicles and your anal opening) and around your anus. Lightly swirl the lubrication around your perineum and your anus with your fingertips only. Focus your attention on the sensations emanating from the tip of your penis and your fingertips.
- While stimulating this area you might find it enjoyable to insert the first digit (or more) of your index finger into your anus.
- Note the thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images that accompany your actions. Exploring this area can feel threatening for many heterosexual men. They equate pleasurable sensations in this area with latent homosexual tendencies and this is reflected in their thoughts and personal scripts. The reality of stimulating this area is that it feels good for many men.
- Continue to do this for another minute or two.
- Now go back to any type of stimulation you find pleasurable and continue this activity. You might try combining different types of stimulation or using both hands to pleasure yourself. Focus your attention on the sensations in your entire penis, testicles, perineum and your hand.
- Note the thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images that accompany your actions.
- Continue doing this until you achieve orgasm or decide to stop.
- After you ejaculate, lie quietly and pay attention to the sensations in your genital area and the rest of your body. Note the thoughts, feelings, personal scripts, and mental images that accompany your return to the un-aroused state. Allow your body to *relax*, your penis to go limp, and your breathing to return to normal before getting up and washing off.



Try to think of mindful masturbation as a personal form of mindfulness practice to help you become more aware of your personal sexual response and increase your overall moment-by-moment awareness. If your mind keeps bringing up outdated personal scripts related to masturbation, try to examine their helpfulness by asking yourself the following questions:

Are these thoughts, personal scripts, emotions, and mental images related to masturbation helping or hindering my personal and relationship sexual goals?