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### Survey: Older Women May Avoid Sex

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ROCHESTER, N.Y., Aug. 17 (UPI) -- A U.S. survey found 44 percent of women over age 35 say that they have avoided, made an excuse or stopped having sex because of physical discomfort.

More than half of U.S. women ages 35 and over are having less sex during menopause than before menopause, found the Sex & Menopause Survey, conducted by Harris Interactive for Duramed Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

The survey of 1,054 women ages 35 and over who are perimenopausal, menopausal or post-menopausal found that 76 percent of women in committed or long-term relationships say that sex is at least somewhat an important part of that relationship, but less than half say they are satisfied with the amount of sex they have.

While 95 percent of the women were knowledgeable about hot flashes and 91 percent were knowledgeable about night sweats, 47 percent reported they were not knowledgeable about another symptom of menopause -- vaginal atrophy, resulting in vaginal narrowing or shrinkage which can cause vaginal dryness and painful sex.

Dr. Murray A. Freedman, a gynecologist in Augusta, Ga., says there are many treatments for vaginal atrophy such as over-the-counter lubricants and that women who continue to have intercourse can help ease the severity of vaginal atrophy.

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