# Exploring the complexities of sexual health and self-tracking



In a recent exploration of sexual health and the impact of self-tracking on daily life, both topics shed light on the complexities of human experience through varying lenses.

Dr Janine David, a GP based in Porthcawl, Wales, emphasised the significance of a fulfilling sex life, stating that it not only fosters stronger relationships but also yields numerous health benefits, including improved cardiovascular health and a potential reduction in the risk of prostate cancer. Dr David noted that getting older does not preclude one from enjoying sex, suggesting that adaptations can lead to continued satisfaction in later life.

Meanwhile, research conducted by Andreas Vossler, a professor at the Open University, reveals that some individuals in later life claim they enjoy the best sex of their lives, free from the pressures of family or financial stress that often accompany youth. Addressing concerns about diminished sexual desire, Dr David pointed to the strong connection between libido and hormones, particularly testosterone, which is crucial in driving sexual desire, especially in men. Additionally, factors such as weight gain, diabetes, and age contribute to a decline in testosterone levels, which may lead to complications like erectile dysfunction (ED).

Erectile dysfunction becomes more prevalent with age, affecting approximately 40 per cent of men in their 40s, with rates increasing by ten per cent per decade. Marc Lucky, a consultant urologist, highlighted that lifestyle factors, including obesity and smoking, can exacerbate the situation. Available treatments, including over-the-counter options such as Viagra, can assist in increasing blood flow, though alternatives like prescription-only Cialis and penile injections exist for more severe cases.

On the topic of health and self-improvement, a different narrative unfolds centred around self-tracking, as illustrated by an individual named Adam, who meticulously recorded various aspects of his life through a personal spreadsheet. This practice began as a means to settle a dispute with his partner over the quality time spent together, leading him to track sleep, social interactions, and even dietary choices. The phenomenon of self-tracking has grown widely, facilitated by advancements in technology, that enable individuals to document everything from fitness levels to mental wellbeing.

This trend is not new but has evolved significantly since the concept of the “quantified self” was introduced in the early 2010s by tech enthusiasts aiming to harness the power of data to enhance personal lives. Consequently, wearable devices and smartphone apps have proliferated, ostensibly offering insights into one’s daily activities, lifestyle habits, and health metrics.

However, despite its increasing popularity, self-tracking poses questions about the effectiveness and implications of such practices. While some individuals, particularly those managing chronic health conditions, may find self-tracking beneficial in understanding their symptoms and receiving validation, others have reported mixed results. In some cases, excessive focus on data can lead to stress and anxiety, driving individuals to become overly critical of their daily behaviours and choices.

Experts suggest that while the desire for measurement and assessment is natural, it is vital to approach self-tracking with caution. Ajana, a researcher in digital culture, warns that data without meaningful analysis may simply add to the noise of modern life, rather than contribute to genuine self-improvement or understanding.

Ultimately, both sexual health and self-tracking encapsulate the broader human experience: navigating relationships and personal wellbeing in an increasingly complex world. As societal norms evolve and technology advances, individuals are left to decipher their paths, weighing the merits of data collection against innate emotional insight and connection.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mens-health/ejaculation_frequency_and_prostate_cancer> - This article supports the claim that a fulfilling sex life may reduce the risk of prostate cancer, as it discusses how frequent ejaculation is linked to a lower risk of prostate cancer. It also highlights the importance of sexual health in overall well-being.
* <https://ascopost.com/issues/september-10-2023/study-shows-exercise-may-improve-sexual-function-in-men-with-prostate-cancer/> - This study shows that exercise can improve sexual function in men with prostate cancer, aligning with the idea that a fulfilling sex life contributes to overall health benefits.
* <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/erectile-dysfunction/symptoms-causes/syc-20355776> - This resource explains that erectile dysfunction becomes more prevalent with age and is influenced by lifestyle factors such as obesity and smoking, which is consistent with the article's discussion on ED.
* <https://www.quantifiedself.com/> - This website is dedicated to the concept of the 'quantified self,' which involves using data to understand and improve personal lives, aligning with the article's discussion on self-tracking.
* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7445511/> - This article discusses the benefits and challenges of self-tracking, including its potential to both improve health management and cause stress, which is in line with the article's exploration of self-tracking's implications.
* <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-power-prime/202002/the-impact-of-technology-on-mental-health> - This article explores how technology can impact mental health, including the potential for stress and anxiety from excessive data focus, which is relevant to the article's cautionary note on self-tracking.