

How great sex can prevent headaches

(As long as you haven't already got one)



HAVING sex is one of life's simple pleasures – but it is also good for your health.

The Lovers' Guide video was first released in 1991 and caused controversy for "explicit" content.

But now the popular sex education series is back and is being shown on British TV for the first time.

The 30 episodes on Sky 275 provide an open and frank debate about sex – and show how it can provide a boost to your health.

Insight from doctors and therapists is included in the programmes, revealing the benefits making love can have.

Passion coach Vena Ramphal, who specialises in tantric sex and helps couples achieve more fulfilling sex lives, features in the updated series.

She says: "If you're going to have good sex you are going to have better health."

Here Helen Gilbert reveals why you can't have too much of a good thing. The free Lovers' Guide app uses video footage from the series to illustrate different sexual positions and gives advice on how to have great sex.

For details, see bodyinbalance.tv/loversguide.

Beat Headaches

IT'S the oldest excuse in the book for those not in the mood, but you could banish that headache by getting busy in the bedroom.

Orgasms release natural painkillers such as oxytocin and endorphins, while the "happy" chemical serotonin can also ease stress.

A study in the *Bulletin of Experimental Biology and Medicine* found that volunteers who breathed in oxytocin vapour upped their pain threshold by more than half.

Live Longer

PEOPLE who have sex twice a week are 50 per cent more likely to live longer than those who make love less often, according to doctors at the University of Bristol.

And the good news for younger people is that you can look forward to having sex long into old age, thanks to medical advances such as Viagra.

A study of 6,000 people in the *British Medical Journal* found that 40 per cent of 75 to 85-year-olds still enjoy regular romps.

Cut Heart Attacks

GETTING steamy three times a week may halve the risk of heart attack or stroke, according to a study by Queen's University Belfast.

Reduce Cancers

NOOKIE can help guard against certain cancers. A study in the *British Journal of Urology* revealed men who had five or more ejaculations a week in their 20s reduced their risk of getting prostate cancer by a third.

Research on French women revealed those who had sex more than once a month had a lower risk of developing breast cancer.

Increased levels of hormones which flood the body during sex, and surge on orgasm, are thought to be the reason.

Look Younger

GETTING frisky is a great way to maintain a youthful appearance.

A study of more than 3,500 men and women found that those whose age was regularly underestimated by seven to 12 years enjoyed a romp three times a week, compared to twice a week for the others.

Sex also boosts circulation and increases oxygen supply to cells.

Vena says: "Having sex brings you to life. When you're sexually aroused your heart rate is elevated and your cardio system is working. Your nerve endings are alive. The younger you feel the more healthy you feel."

Boost Immunity

WE'RE heading into cold and flu season but you can stave off the sniffles with sex.

US scientists found that couples who had sex once or twice a week boosted their immune systems by 30 per cent.

And vary the time of day you get jiggy. Researchers claim morning sex can strengthen your immune system by enhancing levels of Immunoglobulin A (IgA), an antibody that fights infection.

Vena says: "Sex is good exercise as well as being fun which means you're more likely to be healthy. Different positions work different muscles."

Reduce Diabetes

GETTING hot and steamy could help reduce your risk of Type 2 diabetes. DHEA – released at the point of climax – improves insulin action, according to a Journal of the American Medical Association study. Meanwhile, sex can also indicate potential health problems. Erectile dysfunction, for instance, can be an early warning sign of heart disease.

The build-up of plaques in the arteries – known as atherosclerosis – limits blood flow and because the arteries supplying the penis are smaller than those supplying the heart, symptoms may show up here first.

Bond Building

SEX releases endorphins and hormones which help you feel emotionally closer to your bedfellow.

During orgasm men release the monogamy molecule vasopressin, which triggers a “not want to leave home feeling”, while oxytocin creates a “loved up” effect.

Vena says: "From an emotional point of view, sex is an opportunity to connect with another human being in a profound way."

“Sex is a primal instinct that is core to our humanity and the core of healthy sex because it provides that connection.”