

There's no faking it—your sexual partner knows if you're really satisfied

10 April 2014



There is no point faking it in bed because chances are your sexual partner will be able to tell. A study by researchers at the University of Waterloo found that men and women are equally perceptive of their partners' levels of sexual satisfaction.

The study by Erin Fallis, PhD candidate, and co-authors Professor Uzma S. Rehman and Professor Christine Purdon in the Department of Psychology at Waterloo, identified [sexual communication](#) and ability to recognize emotions as important factors that predict accuracy in gauging one partner's sexual satisfaction.

The study was published in the journal *Archives of Sexual Behavior* this month.

"We found that, on average, both men and women have fairly accurate and unbiased perceptions of their [partners'](#) sexual satisfaction," said Fallis, the

study's lead author. "We also found that having good communication about [sexual issues](#) helped participants to understand their partners' sexual satisfaction. However, even if sexual communication was lacking, a person could still be fairly accurate in gauging his or her partner's sexual satisfaction if he or she was able to read emotions well."

The study involved 84 couples that were part of a larger study on sexual functioning and satisfaction. Fallis separated the partners, asked them to each report on their levels of commitment, [relationship satisfaction](#), sexual satisfaction, sexual communication and measured their emotion recognition abilities.

Couples in a sexual relationship develop what psychologists call a sexual script, which forms guidelines for their sexual activity.

"Over time, a couple will develop sexual routines," said Fallis. "We believe that having the ability to accurately gauge each other's sexual satisfaction will help partners to develop sexual scripts that they both enjoy. Specifically, being able to tell if their partners are sexually satisfied will help people decide whether to stick with a current routine or try something new."

As well as affirming important factors for healthy sexual relationships, the study's findings may help to reduce a common stereotype in our culture that women and men have difficulty communicating with and understanding one another.

"The next step in this research is to look at the impacts of having more or less accurate perceptions of one's partner's sexual satisfaction over time in long-term relationships," said Fallis. "We expect that having a more accurate understanding of one's partner's sexual satisfaction will have positive impacts for both partners' [sexual satisfaction](#) and we're eager to test this idea."

Provided by University of Waterloo

APA citation: There's no faking it—your sexual partner knows if you're really satisfied (2014, April 10) retrieved 11 October 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-04-faking-ityour-sexual-partner-youre.html>

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