

# Pleasurable's Some Healthcare Providers Who Assist with Sexual Wellness

## → Allergists

- ◆ Reasons to be a client: If you or one of your other providers suspects you may have allergies such as to latex or semen, allergists can assist with testing, treatment, and counseling about the best ways to avoid your allergy.

## → Certified sex therapists

- ◆ Reasons to be a client: Emotions relating to sex that trouble you or interfere with your ability to have or enjoy sex, lack of sexual experience, and trauma, which can be physical or emotional and can also be caused by social, religious, or cultural frameworks. Sex therapists have a better understanding of the physiology of sex than most other “talk therapy” providers. These providers may not be covered by health insurance.

## → Gastroenterologists

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: Pelvic pain can be caused by gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms as the result of conditions such as Crohn's disease, colitis, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), hemorrhoids, and fissures.

## → Gynecologists

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: If you are a person with ovaries, Fallopian tubes, uterus, cervix, or a vagina, gynecologists will help you track and manage the health of those organs. Some gynecologists will accept patients of any gender who have any of the following: ovaries, Fallopian tubes, uterus, cervix, or a vagina.

## → Obstetrician-gynecologists (ob-gyn)

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: If you have been pregnant, you want to become pregnant, or think you might be pregnant. Obstetricians specifically focus on pregnancy, childbirth and the period of time that follows childbirth (called the postpartum period).

## → Occupational therapists (some)

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: For those who provide this service, occupational therapists can help you figure out what accommodations, such as adaptive equipment or specific positions, you might need to have a fulfilling sex life.

→ Pain Management Specialists:

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: You may be referred to a pain management specialist if you are experiencing chronic pain in any area in the body especially in the case of widespread pain, pain on multiple locations, pain that has not been able to be managed by more conservative treatments like NSAIDs or physical therapy, and in cases where pain persists even after a surgery meant to correct or mitigate a condition. Pain specialists are more likely than other providers to prescribe medications that are controlled substances, so you may have to undergo urine testing and monthly appointments to insure you are able to get your medication. Some pain management procedures like injections or infusions can have spotty insurance coverage.

→ Pelvic floor therapists

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: If you have pelvic pain (which doesn't have to be caused or aggravated by sex). Some pelvic floor therapists will accept patients of any gender. Most pelvic floor therapists will require a diagnosis or referral from a specialist. Insurance coverage can be difficult and difficulty increases if a patient is seeing a physical therapist for other concerns due to session limitations.

→ Proctologists (also known as Colorectal Surgeons)

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: You may be referred to a proctologist by gastroenterologists, gynecologists, or pain management specialists if you need more advanced treatments (usually surgery) for symptoms or conditions in the colon or rectum such as hemorrhoids or fissures.

→ Reproductive endocrinologists (fertility specialists)

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: If you have ovaries and would like to become pregnant, fertility specialists may be able to help you. Their services are almost never covered by insurance.

→ Sexual and reproductive health clinics

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: If you're seeking birth control or safer sex supplies, testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), pregnancy testing, free sex education materials, and in some clinics, abortions.

→ Therapists (psychologists, clinical social workers, and counselors)

- ◆ Reasons to be a client: Social anxiety, low self-esteem, body image issues. Can also treat the same issues as certified sex therapists but may not be as comfortable discussing sex as sex therapists will be. More likely to be covered by insurance than services from sex therapists.

→ Uro-gynecologists

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: If you are a person with a vagina, uro-gynecologists will help you with issues of the pelvic floor such pain and dysfunction, prolapse (vaginal, anal, bladder, and small bowel), and urinary issues involving your bladder and urethra.

→ Urologists

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: If you are a person with a penis, urologists will help you track and manage the health of your reproductive organs (penis, scrotum, testicles, vas deferens, prostate, and urethra). Urologists assist with reproduction, management of erectile dysfunction, and urinary issues. Some urologists will accept patients of any gender who have urinary issues.

→ Vulvovaginal specialists

- ◆ Reasons to be a patient: If your gynecologist has not been able to figure out the cause of or treatment for a symptom or condition you are experiencing in your vulvovaginal region, a vulvovaginal specialist may be able to assist you. They generally require a transfer of your medical records from your gynecologist before an initial appointment. Their services are almost never covered by insurance.