

## MYTHS AND MISINFORMATION

There are some common myths about sex during those 40 weeks of pregnancy. Remember to consider your relationship (*is it healthy? Am I doing this for me?*) and protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs) before considering sexual contact.

### MYTH

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Most women do not want sex during pregnancy.

Most pregnant women do not need lubricant during sexual activity.

Sex during pregnancy will harm the baby.

Sex causes premature labor contractions.

Oral sex isn't OK.

### FACT

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In truth, each woman's libido (desire for sex) is different during pregnancy. A woman may feel like having sex with one pregnancy and be less interested during another pregnancy. Most women enjoy sex throughout their pregnancy without complications.

While some women report adequate arousal and enhanced lubrication during pregnancy, some women report the opposite – everybody is unique. Try a body-friendly silicone-based lubricant for long-lasting lubrication that never gets sticky.

The baby is protected in the amniotic fluid sac, so sexual activity will not hurt the baby. Old wives' tale of sex during pregnancy causing a cleft or dimple in a baby's chin is untrue.

Women can experience many contractions without going into active labor, causing cervical dilation. Oxytocin can increase breast stimulation and/or orgasm resulting in an increase in contractions, especially near the end of a pregnancy. Sex alone is not known to cause labor, as there are a number of other changes, such as changes in hormone levels, that occur to determine when labor will begin.

Oral sex is a sensual activity that many couples enjoy whether they are pregnant or not. One of the most common challenges deals with concerns about an air bubble being blown into the women's blood stream or causing a women discomfort. A partner should be careful not to blow air forcefully and directly into the vagina.

## MYTH

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You should not use self-stimulators and vibrators during pregnancy.

All sexual positions are comfortable during pregnancy.

All couples resume sexual activity by the 6-week postpartum visit

Breastfeeding moms do not need lubricant.



## FACT

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Sexual accessories like self-stimulators and vibrators are perfectly safe to use for some added enhancement during pregnancy. Be sure to clean them between uses without sharing them between partners.

As pregnancy progresses, some sexual positions may become more uncomfortable as the uterus grows. Some women find missionary position uncomfortable; others prefer positioning where the woman can take control over the depth and force of penetration. Refer to the positions section of this class for more information.

There is no universal timeline to resume sexual activity – each body and its need will differ. Refer to our postpartum handouts for more tips and information regarding postpartum challenges and needs. Resuming sexual intercourse between new parents is an important milestone. Consult your healthcare professional if you are experiencing difficulty.

Women breastfeeding exclusively may see hormonal changes affect menstrual cycles or vaginal dryness. Try a lubricant to help improve sexual comfort and consult your healthcare professional should you have further concerns.

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