

## References

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## For More Information Call or Visit:

### The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit

#### Windsor:

519-258-2146 ext. 1350  
1005 Ouellette Avenue  
Windsor, ON N9A 4J8

#### Leamington:

519-326-5716 ext. 1350  
215 Talbot Street East  
Leamington, ON N8H 3X5

#### Essex:

519-776-5933 ext. 1350  
360 Fairview Avenue West, Suite 215  
Essex, ON N8M 3G4

**Toll Free:** 1-800-265-5822 ext. 1350

**E-mail:** [intake@wehealthunit.org](mailto:intake@wehealthunit.org)  
**Website:** [www.wehealthunit.org](http://www.wehealthunit.org)

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# Sex During Pregnancy



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## Is Sex During Pregnancy Safe?

*Each pregnancy is unique. Speak to your doctor about the safety of sex during **your** pregnancy.*

### When could your doctor advise against sex?

- If you have had a miscarriage or pre-term labour or birth
- If your placenta covers part or all of your cervix
- If your cervix begins to open before full term
- If there is a possibility of sexually transmitted infections (STI)
- If you are carrying more than one baby

### Can sex hurt the baby?

In a normal pregnancy, the fetus is protected by the mother's abdominal muscles, amniotic fluid, and the mucous plug.

### Can sex cause a miscarriage?

In a normal pregnancy, sex does not cause a miscarriage. Miscarriage in the first trimester is usually due to genetic abnormalities and other developmental problems with the fetus.

### Call your doctor if you experience:

- Contractions that don't go away.
- A gush or trickle of fluid or blood from your vagina.
- A sudden feeling of baby pushing down.
- An increase in vaginal discharge.
- A feeling that something is wrong.

### Is it safe to have orgasms?

Orgasms may cause contractions of the uterus. In a normal pregnancy, orgasms do not lead to premature labour.

**Speak with your doctor about nipple stimulation, orgasms, and using a condom if you are at high risk for pre-term labour.**

- Stimulation of pregnant woman's nipples may help start contractions and labour.
- Sperm may soften the cervix which helps with dilation.

## What Changes can I Expect Throughout my Pregnancy?

*Throughout pregnancy, every woman will experience a different level of interest in sex.*

### First Trimester (Week 0 - 13)

Changes which may *decrease* sexual desire:

- Nausea/vomiting
- Fatigue
- Sensitive breasts
- Hormonal changes
- Weight gain

Changes which may *increase* sexual desire:

- Hormonal changes
- Sensitive breasts

### Second Trimester (Week 14 - 26)

Changes which may *decrease* sexual desire:

- Pain and discomfort
- Leaking breast milk (colostrum)

Changes which may *increase* sexual desire:

- Increased sensitivity and lubrication of vagina.
- Increased sensitivity to breasts.
- Feeling of general well-being.

### Third Trimester (Week 27 - 40)

Changes which may *decrease* sexual desire:

- Fatigue
- Back pain
- Concerns about birth
- Enlarged abdomen
- Other pain

### Tips to keep in mind:

- Avoid lying flat on your back to prevent light-headedness and/or nausea.
- Baby movements might be felt following orgasms.
- The length of the vagina might be shorter near the end of pregnancy due to "lightening".

*It's ok to say "No" to your partner. Let your partner know your comfort level. Your body and your relationship are going through changes.*

## Helpful Tips

*Always communicate feelings and desires with your partner.*

*Continue cuddling and touching throughout your pregnancy to heighten sensuality and intimacy.*

*Try changing positions to see if you can find one that is more comfortable for you.*

### Things to consider to keep romance alive:

- Set aside time for intimacy.
- Try using lubricating jelly.
- Create a romantic atmosphere.
- Try role playing or a fantasy.
- Try having sex in different rooms of your house.
- Read romantic books and stories or watch films together.
- Try bathing or showering together.
- Consider masturbation.
- Be creative and respectful.
- Try writing love letters to each other.

### Words of Precaution

- Never blow air into the vagina during oral sex.
- Take care with sex toys to prevent pain or infection.
- Infections can be transmitted during oral sex. These include sexually transmitted infections (STI's) as well as oral herpes. Dangers of transmitting herpes to your unborn baby include neurological damage, mental retardation, or death.

