



PARENTS CENTRE

Where parenting is everything!

Ask a CBE

'I'm pregnant, and not sure if it's ok to make love – is it safe?'

Medical concerns aside*, making love during pregnancy is absolutely fine. In fact, for some couples it is a liberating time in their lives where anxieties around contraception, unplanned pregnancies, etc. need no consideration at all!

Some women report pregnancy to be a time when they've never felt so sexual, sensual or down right horny! Equally for other women the opposite couldn't be more true; feelings of fatigue, hormones, emotions and physical shape make the prospect of making love low on the list of priorities! It's not unusual to feel more inclined to make love during one part of pregnancy, but feel quite different during another trimester. With all such things, communication is key; and of course, this communication goes both ways – both partners need to be comfortable and in agreement.

Will sex during pregnancy hurt my baby? The short answer is No. The baby is well cushioned so that if your partner is lying on top of you, your baby won't be getting squashed. You may however, wish to experiment with different positions, if you're finding traditional positions uncomfortable. If your man is particularly well endowed, this too won't harm baby – the position of the baby and the angle of the vagina makes this impossible; this applies to adult toys too, and just remember to be gentle.

Will sex bring on labour? Well, it can help, but the body needs to be in a ready state for it to have significant effect. That is, the body is preparing to naturally start labour on its own. Semen contains prostaglandins, which contribute to labour starting, and being sexually aroused releases oxytocin, which again contributes to starting labour. Both of these hormones need to be in a high concentration to make any substantial difference.

*You will be advised by your Lead Maternity Caregiver if you have a high-risk pregnancy or where intercourse could be risky during pregnancy. Some such situations could include:

- Vaginal bleeding
- If your waters have broken
- History of miscarriage
- If you have placenta praevia
- Potentially in the third trimester if you're pregnancy with multiples
- Any time something just doesn't feel right

If in doubt, always consult with your Lead Maternity Caregiver

References:

<http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/pregnancy/helpful-advice-during-pregnancy/sex-during-pregnancy>
<https://www.huggies.co.nz/pregnancy/health-and-care/sex>