

## **Sexual Relationship during Pregnancy**

Pregnancy is a time of countless physical and emotional adjustments that affects every couple's sexual relationship. Sex during pregnancy is a topic which is rarely discussed, because of the societal and cultural tendency to avoid association between expectant mothers and sexuality. In reality, sex during pregnancy is pleasurable and desirable for a vast majority of couples. However, the alterations caused by pregnancy can often get in the way of these sexual interests and desires for both mothers and fathers to be.

Pregnancy can play a significant role in fluctuating sex-drive of women. Some women experience a decrease in their libido during certain stages in their pregnancy. The fatigue, vomiting, aching and nausea symptoms that accompany the trimesters facilitate the reduced sexual interest. On the other hand, some women experience no change or even an increase their sex-drive during pregnancy. Women often find that they are free from their worries about contraception. This freedom combined with a new sense of intimacy with their partner can help make sex more gratifying.

In addition to the changes in libido in women, men also experience alternations in their sex interest throughout their partner's pregnancy. Some men become more intimate with their partners because they enjoy the bodily changes that come along pregnancy. However, other men may experience a decrease in sexual interest because they are concerned about the health of both the mother and their unborn child. Moreover, the burdens of accepting the partner as an expectant mother and having a child can also inhibit male sex-drive.

Despite the sexual drives, couples are often concerned about having sex during pregnancy. Their main worry revolves around the idea that sex might hurt the baby. However, it is important to note that sex is not harmful for the baby unless there is bleeding or a history of premature labor or miscarriages.

Even though sex is safe for most couples during pregnancy, however it can become uncomfortable. Couples find it hard to engage in sex during pregnancy because some positions will no longer be comfortable. Moreover, women might avoid sex because deep penetration is

rather painful. In addition, having an orgasm during the late stages of pregnancy can set off painful contractions in women which can also decrease their desire to engage in sex.

Adjusting to the changes that pregnancy induces in a couple's sexual relationship can be tough. However, simply acknowledging that these emotional times are normal is a good place to start. Moreover, communication between partners about their libido and preferences can help make sure that the sexual relationship during pregnancy is satisfying and comfortable. In addition, discussing the parenthood can also reduce anxiety and fear that may get in the way of a healthy sexual relationship.

Pregnancy can also be a time for partners to explore different types of closeness other than sex. Some non-sexual closeness can include cuddling, kissing, touching or massages. These options can help reduce the tension caused by the fluctuating sex-drives experienced by both partners. Moreover, this non-sexual closeness can help reassure pregnant women that their partners are still attracted to them no matter how unsexy and big they might feel.

The birth of a baby is considered a difficult leap for a couple. It is particularly difficult to keep the relationship a priority especially when the couple has to face all the changes and demands from the time of pregnancy until their baby is born. As a result, taking time to communicate and discuss difficulties as a couple can help maintain and strengthen the relationship.

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