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How soon after a miscarriage can you have sex? ^[1]

Dear Alice,

How long to wait for sex after a miscarriage? What if you already had sex too soon after a miscarriage? What will happen if you did?

Answer

Dear Reader,

While a miscarriage is a physical process that a person might experience, some may also go through an emotional component as well. Both of these factors may determine when someone feels ready to have sex after a miscarriage. The bottom line about having sex after a miscarriage is that it's a good idea to speak with a health care provider before engaging in any sexual activity to avoid any possible physical complications. If someone has sex after a miscarriage before doing so, it's wise to follow-up with them to ensure that there are no infections.

Typically, the longer the pregnancy lasted before the miscarriage, the longer the recommended waiting period before inserting anything into the vagina — this includes a penis, finger, tampon, or sex toy. After a miscarriage, a person is more susceptible to infection because the uterus and cervix remain partially dilated, allowing bacteria to more easily reach the internal structures in the reproductive system. If a person is exposed to bacteria before the healing process is complete, the fallopian tubes, ovaries, uterus, cervix, and vagina could potentially become infected. It's also possible that bleeding may reoccur. If someone already had vaginal sex without consulting a health care provider, it's highly recommended to make an appointment as soon as possible to ensure that the body is healthy and not experiencing any complications.

Peoples' experiences with miscarriage may vary. For some, a miscarriage may occur within the first three to four months of pregnancy. If there are no complications — such as heavy bleeding, pelvic pain, vaginal odor, fever, or even continued pregnancy symptoms — a health care provider may indicate that sexual activity may resume after two to three weeks. For others, a miscarriage may take place in the last five months of pregnancy. If this is the case, a person typically is often advised to wait at least six weeks, sometimes longer. However, regardless of when the miscarriage occurs, people are advised to see their health care provider for a pelvic exam before having sex again. This is because ovulation may resume and pregnancy may possibly occur as

early as two weeks after having a miscarriage.

While there is no absolute as far as returning to the bedroom, everyone has their own timeline, both physically and mentally. That being said, most people experience a mix of emotions after a miscarriage that's different for each individual. Some people have a quick turnaround time and are ready to plan another pregnancy, while others may experience a wide range of emotions that cause them to wait a bit longer before trying to conceive again (if that is their goal). These feelings are normal and, for some people, may cause anxiety around being intimate with a partner. While the body may be physically ready, not everyone is emotionally ready at the same time. Some may find support from a mental health professional to be beneficial to help process the emotions and to enhance their coping skills. At the end of the day, it's about what feels right for each person, including what will reduce risk to their health and well-being.

Hope this helps!

Alice!

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