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[Home](#) > Sex positions as pregnancy progresses

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## **Sex positions as pregnancy progresses** <sup>[1]</sup>

Dear Alice,

Which sex position is safer for pregnant mothers as they get farther in their pregnancy?

### **Answer**

Dear Reader,

There is no need to sacrifice sexual pleasure just because you are expecting. Vaginal sex is generally safe during pregnancy unless a health care provider has informed you otherwise (this may be the case, for instance, if there is concern over preterm labor or if the mother has unexplained vaginal bleeding) so enjoy these nine months of sex free from worry over unintended pregnancy! Since most sexual positions are perfectly safe, it is up to you and your partner to determine which are the most comfortable and enjoyable for you.

There are some caveats to this, however. Although sex and orgasm are unlikely to trigger premature birth or harm the fetus (it is naturally protected by the amniotic sac in the uterus and the mucus plug that blocks the cervix during pregnancy), certain sexual activities are not recommended. For instance, anal sex may introduce bacteria from the rectum into the vagina, which may affect the fetus. Additionally, if you and your partner have oral sex, avoid blowing air into the mother's vagina. On rare occasions this may cause a blocked blood vessel which could be life threatening to the mother and fetus. One more thing to keep in mind is that, even though there is no chance of getting pregnant, sexual contact could lead to the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) that may be harmful to the fetus. To prevent transmission, expectant mothers can use condoms with new partners, non-monogamous partners, or partners with STIs or unknown STI status.

Because of the myriad hormones surging through her body, a pregnant woman's sex drive may vary dramatically during those nine months. On top of this, the physical discomfort and psychological adjustment that may come with pregnancy can influence an expectant mother's desire for sex. So when the mood hits you, take advantage and get creative! Having sex side-by-side ("spooning") or with the mother on top avoids putting pressure on her belly. And remember, sex is more than just intercourse! Pregnancy may be a great time to experiment with different forms of sexual contact and foreplay. If you are still concerned, you can speak with your OB/GYN

or other health care provider.

Some women find that their sex drive actually increases during pregnancy because of the increased blood flow to their reproductive organs so canoodle away and look at these nine months as time to connect to your partner in a way that you never have before!

Alice!

Category:

[Sexual & Reproductive Health](#) [2]

[Sexual Questions](#) [3]

[About Intercourse](#) [4]

## Related questions

[What is outercourse?](#) [5]

[Resuming intercourse after childbirth — How long do we need to wait?](#) [6]

[Okay to eat sushi and yogurt during pregnancy?](#) [7]

[We're pregnant: Can we still have sex?](#) [8]

[Anal sex: Safe with baby-on-the-way?](#) [9]

[Intercourse just before child birth?](#) [10]

## Resources

[Medical Services \(Morningside\)](#) [11]

[Medical Services \(CUIMC\)](#) [12]

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## Footer menu

- ▼ [Contact Alice!](#)
  - [Content Use](#)
  - [Media Inquiries](#)
  - [Comments & Corrections](#)
- ▼ [Syndication & Licensing](#)
  - [Licensing Q&As](#)
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  - [Link to Go Ask Alice!](#)

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**Links**

- [1] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/sex-positions-pregnancy-progresses>
- [2] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/sexual-reproductive-health>
- [3] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/sexual-questions>
- [4] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/about-intercourse>
- [5] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/what-outercourse>
- [6] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/resuming-intercourse-after-childbirth-%E2%80%94-how-long-do-we-need-wait>
- [7] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/okay-eat-sushi-and-yogurt-during-pregnancy>
- [8] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/were-pregnant-can-we-still-have-sex>
- [9] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/anal-sex-safe-baby-way>
- [10] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/intercourse-just-child-birth>
- [11] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/resource/medical-services-morningside>
- [12] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/resource/medical-services-cuimc>