



Published on *Go Ask Alice!* (<https://goaskalice.columbia.edu>)

[Home](#) > Safety tips for male sex toys?

Safety tips for male sex toys? ^[1]

Hi Alice,

First let me just say how much I love your website and your terrific advice — it has saved me from a lot of embarrassing questions. LOL.

You see I am interested in buying a sex toy, preferably a penis sleeve or masturbator (for me to masturbate with). I have recently asked my mom about this and she does seem like it is open for discussion. The only thing is, she wants to know if the use of sex toys such as these (that vibrate or not) are safe and if I can damage my penis somehow or if there are any risks using these kinds of devices. I don't think there are any risks except for allergic reactions or not enough use of lubrication. But I am not sure. So please, please Alice, answer my question.

Thank you,
Lust for a sex toy

Answer

Dear Lust for a sex toy,

It's thanks to people like you that there are so many good questions to answer here at *Go Ask Alice!* First, a round of applause for you and your mother, for being able to have an open, honest conversation about sexuality and your safety. Hopefully the following information will be helpful for you both.

When you're thinking about buying a sex toy it's a good idea to take a few things into account: quality of the product, design, and materials (what it's made of). Sex toys are not well regulated so it's key that you, the consumer, know what to look for and what to avoid. Going to a reputable store might help you avoid ending up with a low-quality toy. Look for stores or brands that offer warranties, and try to find a shop where the sales person is knowledgeable about the products.

Often with sex toys, it pays to spend a bit more money and invest in products made of silicone, stainless steel, or glass (depending on the type of toy) rather than other materials. All these materials can be disinfected without damaging the toy, and silicone and glass are hypoallergenic. Toys made of other products such as jelly rubber or latex may be fun, but can degrade with use

and in some cases may be made with materials that can be toxic, may cause skin irritation, and are harder to disinfect without causing damage.

The type of toy is also a consideration. You mentioned that you are interested in a penis sleeve or a masturbator. A masturbation sleeve mimics the size, shape, and feel of the inside of a vagina or rectum, or sometimes a mouth. Generally used with lube, these toys can provide an alternative to the digital variety of loving your love-maker. When buying, one element of the toy to consider is how easy it will be to clean; are both ends open? Is it possible to turn the sleeve inside-out for washing? Using soap and water to wash, and drying the toy thoroughly after each use, will keep you, and the toy, humming longer.

Additional safety (and pleasure) considerations include:

- Does the sleeve vibrate or have moving parts? If so, it's probably battery powered or plugs into an electrical socket, and may not be safe for use in the shower or tub. If underwater play is desired, look for waterproof toys.
- What's the proper lube? Using lotion or oil on latex is a no-no, as is using silicone-based lube on silicone toys (the toys will degrade) — generally water-based lubes are a safe bet.

Whatever toy you choose, remember that the penis is made of delicate tissue that can be damaged. Avoid putting a penis in holes that might be too small to get out of, use plenty of lube (friction and chafing make for uncomfortable masturbation!), and wash yourself and your toy regularly. Then, go ahead and enjoy!

Alice!

Category:

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

[Tools & Toys](#) ^[3]

Related questions

[Spice up sex life?](#) ^[4]

[Considering cock rings](#) ^[5]

[Numbing lube safe for anal sex?](#) ^[6]

Published date:

Sep 19, 2008

Last reviewed on:

May 29, 2015

Footer menu

▼ [Contact Alice!](#)

◦ [Content Use](#)

◦ [Media Inquiries](#)

◦ [Comments & Corrections](#)

▼ [Syndication & Licensing](#)

- [Licensing Q&As](#)
- [Get Alice! on Your Website](#)
- [Full Site Syndication](#)
- [Link to Go Ask Alice!](#)

Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.

If you are in an urgent situation, please [visit our Emergency page](#) to view a list of 24 hour support services and hotlines.

Source URL: <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/safety-tips-male-sex-toys>

Links

[1] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/safety-tips-male-sex-toys>

[2] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/sexual-reproductive-health>

[3] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/category/tools-toys>

[4] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/spice-sex-life-1>

[5] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/considering-cock-rings>

[6] <https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/numbing-lube-safe-anal-sex>