Ways for a woman to orgasm during intercourse [1]

(1)
Dear Alice,
I am a sexually active female, but I can't reach orgasm when having sex with my boyfriend. Can you help me out? Thanks.
— Yearning

(2)
Hello Alice,
I am 28 years old. I've had a problem for years now; well, I had this problem all my life and I was too ashamed to seek help. Here it goes: during sexual intercourse, I never feel any sensation or tingling feelings, I feel nothing. I can feel the penis, but that is all. This has been with every guy I've been with and I've been with about 15 guys. I'm currently dating this guy for five years. I love him, but during sex, I feel nothing. He turns me on, and I get aroused, but when it comes to actually having sex, I feel NOTHING. It's like I have a disjunction in my vagina. Does it have something to do with my clitoris? What is wrong with me? Please, can you tell me? I will eventually see a doctor, but I just want to know, what is the problem with me? Please, I would really appreciate it, I've kinda learned to live with it. Sad, right? :)
— C

(3)
Dear Alice,
Yet again, another question about intercourse and (female) orgasms. I am 25 and have been having intercourse for about 1 1/2 years and have never experienced even the remotest possibility of climaxing from intercourse. Intercourse does NOTHING for me. I've read the Hite Report, I know it claims that only 30% of women orgasm from intercourse alone; however, most women who say they don't orgasm from intercourse say that they at least receive some arousal or stimulation or pleasure from the sensation--it just doesn't lead them to orgasm. However, I have never received the SLIGHTEST sexual pleasure from intercourse--and it's making me so unhappy and desperate that I feel I'm going insane.
— Searching for pleasure
Dear Alice,

What is the best way for a woman with an inaccessible clitoris to reach orgasm during intercourse, without artificial stimulation?

Answer

Dear Yearning, C, Searching for pleasure, and Reader,

Many women experience frustration from their inability to feel sensation or sexual pleasure from vaginal-penile intercourse. It is common for women to feel closeness, and fullness, but not the intensity they believe that they "should" be feeling. With a little bit of learning and exploration, you can find ways to enjoy various types of pleasure, intimacy, and even ecstasy.

Before we get hot and heavy, remember — a little lesson in anatomy can lead to huge results. A woman's sexual pleasure, and ultimately orgasm, is much more likely to occur from stimulation to the clitoris. The clitoris is highly sensitive and full of nerve endings. In fact, there are as many nerve endings in the tip of the clitoris as there are in a man's penis! Many of the clitoral nerve endings are subterranean, or below the surface; the visible part of the clitoris is just the tip of the iceberg. However, even “in hiding,” those 6,000 to 8,000 sensory nerve endings can be a mega source of incredible pleasure for many women.

In contrast, the vaginal walls contain relatively few nerve endings. Only the lower third of the vagina has enough nerve endings to feel stimulation from a penis, finger, sex toy, or other penetrative object. This can make intense sexual stimulation, pleasure, and orgasm from vaginal-only penetration unlikely. In reality, the clitoris is perfectly placed. You might consider the clitoris to be "inaccessible" because in-and-out intercourse does not touch your button of joy. The challenge is for you and your partner to find and cultivate its potential.

Generally speaking, touching or pressing the clitoris, directly or indirectly, during intercourse will increase a woman's potential to orgasm. Otherwise, it's like trying to get somewhere in an elevator without pressing the button. Here are a few tips to help you and your partner have a more pleasurable, intense sexual experience:

- **Ask your partner to touch, rub, caress, and/or press your clitoris with his fingers**, whether before, during, or after sex. You can guide him by placing your fingers over his fingers or hand, and pressing the spots you like in the motion and frequency that makes you go wild. You can try using your own fingers during sex, too!
- **Explore with foreplay**. Sometimes you may feel ready for intercourse immediately, while other times you may want your partner to first touch, rub, kiss, or lick your vulva and clitoris, using his hands, mouth, or penis. Oral sex can be highly pleasurable to many women because of its direct focus on the clitoris. Women describe intense orgasms through oral sex.
- **Add a few drops of lube** [3] to reduce friction and give a more sensual feel. Remember, it's
better when it’s wetter!

- **Try a variety of sex positions where your clitoris might be further stimulated.** For example, the woman-on-top position has more potential for clitoral stimulation than the missionary position \(^4\). On top, you can have more control over the amount of stimulation, rhythm, and pacing. You can move your hips to reach his pubic bone, or he can change the angle of his hips. He can also enter you from behind and reach around to caress your clitoris. If you like deep penetration and pressure on your cervix, then choose positions that make this more possible. Get creative! Certain sex positions may feel more exciting to you than others, and this may differ each time you have sex.

- **Incorporate sex toys into your sex play.** Some women enjoy using a vibrator, either alone or with a partner, to stimulate their clitoris during sex.

- **Read up!** Books such as *She Comes First: The Thinking Man’s Guide to Pleasuring a Woman*, by Ian Kerner, *The Clitoral Truth: The Secret World at Your Fingertips*, by Rebecca Chalker, and *Because it Feels Good: A Women’s Guide to Sexual Pleasure and Satisfaction* by Debbie Herbenick can provide more information.

Remember, if you are generally satisfied with your sexual activity, there is no need to be dismayed by your lack of vaginal sensation or feel pressured to feel pleasure or orgasm during intercourse. Instead, if you wish, you can view and use sex play as an opportunity for you and your partner to experiment with and learn from your bodies. Either way, it is important to verbally let your partner know what turns you on the most. And remember, it may take time to learn exactly what that is.

The key is to have the confidence that your body is perfect, the courage to explore your individual responses on your own, the trust to share this information with a caring partner, and the humor to laugh as you learn together. You never know what the results could be!

Alice!

**Category:** Sexual & Reproductive Health \(^5\)  
**Orgasms** \(^6\)

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