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Petroleum jelly — Good or bad as lube for condoms? ^[1]

Hey Alice,

I want to ask if I can use Vaseline to substitute K-Y or Aqualube when making love with condoms?

— Wondering?

Answer

Dear Wondering?,

No!!!

It's good you asked. Vaseline is oil-based. Oil and latex are *not* friends — one might even say they're enemies! Oil eats away at rubber, so oil-based lubes can cause condoms to break. Also, because oils don't dissolve with water, they tend to stick around longer if you put them in orifices like the anus or vagina. This can trap bacteria, increasing the risk of getting an infection. When loving involves latex, stick with water-based lubricants made especially for enhancing sexual pleasure.

Lube can definitely be a bonus when it comes to sex. For some people it delays orgasm, making sex last longer. It can also reduce tissue irritation, which decreases the risk of spreading sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Putting a few drops of lube on the inside of a condom can increase sensation for the penis. Flavored lube can also improve the taste of latex during oral sex. A note of caution — some people find lubes with glycerin irritating to their skin, so if you or your partner are getting itchy, look for something without glycerin.

Vaseline, baby oil, massage oil, and whipped cream can all be useful... for moisturizing your lips, smoothing your skin, rubbing down your partner, or sweetening them up. But for condoms or dams, water-based lubes, plus a bit of saliva, are the things to use. As an added perk, a large variety of water-based lubes that are safe for use with condoms and dams are now widely available. Experiment a little and find the one that works for you and your partner.

Here's to smooth sailing!

Alice!

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