

Possible to penetrate the cervix during sex? ^[1]

Dear Alice,

I've read some other questions on here about men hitting the cervix with their penis and that the penis doesn't go through the cervix. I'm larger than average and my girlfriend is telling me that I'm actually going through the cervix. When we first started having sex it was very painful for her because she thought that I was penetrating the cervix. Now she's past it being painful but still thinks that I'm actually penetrating the cervix. My question is, is that possible?

Answer

Dear Reader,

The long and short of it is that the penis cannot penetrate the cervix during sex. The cervix has a small opening called the os that enlarges during childbirth (check out pictures of the uterus and cervix from [Mayo Clinic](#) ^[2]), but otherwise remains a tiny opening. The os is usually plugged with mucus and is too small to let a penis inside. Deep pain during sex may result from a variety of conditions, infections, and/or certain surgeries or medical treatments. Communicating with your girlfriend about what feels good and what doesn't may help you better understand and eventually treat the cause of the pain.

Dyspareunia (a.k.a. painful intercourse) affects about 60 percent of women at some point, although it is generally just a short episode. It is characterized by persistent or recurrent genital pain that happens just before, during, or after sex. Although there may be a physical reason for the pain, i.e., penis hitting the cervix or stressing the pelvic floor muscles, emotional factors may also play a role, such as:

- Psychological conditions
- Stress or anxiety
- History of sexual abuse

Treatment for dyspareunia may include changing hygiene habits, sexual practices, and/or seeking medications and therapies. A health care provider can help determine what is going on. For more information on why sex may be painful for your girlfriend, check out the answers to [Painful penetration?](#) [3] and [Sore sex?](#) [4] in the *Go Ask Alice!* sexuality archives.

You may also want to consider having a heart-to-heart with your girlfriend to discuss what could make sex more comfortable. For example, if you think that your penis may be hitting (but not penetrating) her cervix, try different positions, such as having your partner on top so she can control the depth of penetration. Other ideas include extending foreplay to make sure you are both fully aroused and/or using lube. But whether it's more lube or extra caressing, communication and support can play a significant role in overcoming the pain.

Hoping this answer hits the spot,

Alice!

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Published date:

Aug 28, 2009

Last reviewed on:

Apr 29, 2015

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