



Module 1

Sex and pregnancy





Module 1: Sex and pregnancy

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For some men, thoughts of physical intimacy or having sex with the future mother of their child, during pregnancy, can be a source of worry and in some cases, disgust. Don't feel bad for having these thoughts.

You don't need me to tell you, your life is changing. Sometimes it can feel overwhelming. Yes, men can also feel "overwhelmed!" There's nothing wrong with you, it's a process, one I'm here to guide you through. Believe me, now is the time to prepare. There might be major changes in her behaviour, mood and physical capacities ahead. Your intimate sexual history together holds the key to you noticing changes to her desire for, and willingness to have sex with you.

It's probably always a bad idea to generalise, but fair to assume, that her attitude to sex will be different, particularly in the early months of pregnancy. I have spoken to many men who have needed reassurance during this period. Are you ready for a revelation?

Her not wanting sex has very little to do with you.

I hope that feels better. Wish someone could have told me that when I was a younger dad-to-be.

For some of us our sense of self-worth can take a hit when she isn't wanting to make love as often. Leading to periods of silent brooding and introspection. Well, the good news is, her lack of sexual desire is probably due to the massive changes occurring in her body, rather than any loss of affection for you.

Think about it for a second. Think about your partner and the physical and emotional transition happening right now as the baby grows inside her. These emotions, her evolving body shape and size are in no small part due to the huge shift occurring in her internal hormonal balance.

And of course, there's the real possibility your partners sexual desire towards you may increase at anytime during the pregnancy and this guide will help you prepare for that too.

Here are some of the physical challenges she may experience in the early months of pregnancy, after reading through the list of symptoms that follow, imagine how experiencing them would affect your desire for sex?

Nausea

Vomiting

Excessive salivation

Dizziness

Tiredness

Some women experience a decrease in their feelings of attractiveness and self-worth

Breast tenderness

Increased anxiety and mood swings

Changes in how she views herself

Excessive vaginal discharge

These kinds of symptoms can be present during the first 12 weeks of a woman's pregnancy and tend to settle down after that period. For fewer women they can carry on throughout the pregnancy until the birth of the baby.

Oxytocin

If you have read anything I've written in the past, you will certainly be aware of the hormone Oxytocin and how important it is when a woman is pregnant.

To be frank it's important to her all the time, pregnant or not, and understanding its role in a woman's ability to maintain her sense of wellbeing could save your relationship, and if she is experiencing high levels of stress, your life!

Oxytocin has been called the Social Attachment Hormone. It is the hormone she needs in abundance to feel like she even likes you, let alone wants to shag you! While she is pregnant and later as she breastfeeds she will be producing large quantities of the stuff, just as she does whenever she enjoys a body shaking orgasm.

If your partner is going to want to be sexually intimate with you while she is pregnant, her oxytocin levels are going to play an important role in making it a possibility. Your attitude and behaviours regarding sex and intimacy are going to be key as her pregnancy unfolds and there are ways you can help her produce oxytocin without sex.

A relaxing massage

A relaxing massage that does not include sexual activity is an effective way to increase her oxytocin levels. Receiving your love and attention in this way wraps her in a sense of security and warmth, preventing any unwanted feelings of abandonment which would cause her oxytocin levels to plummet.

To feel good about her relationship to you, she needs to trust that you care for her as much as she cares for you. When you are offering her this kind of support you are directly affecting her oxytocin levels, which in turn will lower her stress, benefit your baby, and make sexual intimacy more likely.

What can you do to make it more likely her oxytocin levels remain high?

These are a few practical actions you can begin to take today, which in many ways will act like foreplay when it comes to sexual intimacy.

- ▶ Offer her a massage at least twice a week. She can obviously refuse, but you offered her right? Included here is a free PDF on massage techniques, and a free video demonstrating massage in pregnancy.
- ▶ Pick a job around the house you can see needs doing. Do it, without being asked and without looking for praise.
- ▶ When she speaks to you about anything, listen until she has finished. No jumping in and definitely don't offer any solutions. Just listen.



If the woman you love is going to feel inclined to have sex with you while she is pregnant, your awareness of the hormonal dance she is in will be key.

I've given you enough information to get you started, what follows in exercise you can do together.

WARNING: Reading about the exercise IS NOT the same as DOING IT!

You and your partner will only get the abundant benefits available to you both if you actually DO IT.

The importance of her oxytocin levels should be clear to you now.

With this knowledge, I want to offer this exercise for you both, with the goal of intimacy in mind. To some of you it may sound a little cheesy as I describe it, please give it a go anyway.

You may feel resistant or a sense of unfamiliarity surrounding this new role which I'm suggesting to you, but all I ask is you give it a try and test it out in your own experience.

An exercise to do together

- Plan a time when you and your partner can be alone and undisturbed.
- Make yourself comfortable and sit facing each other. This next step might take some doing unless you are used to this kind of thing. Look into each other's eyes and hold each other's hands.
- As your eyes and hands connect, become aware of each other's breathing pattern and begin to mimic your rhythms. In breath and out breath together.
- Do this for about 5-10 minutes. Take the opportunity to remember when you first became aware of your love. Allow some memories of good times together to replay in your mind as you look into each other's eyes.
- Spend 5 minutes each telling each other what you were remembering. Finish up with a hug.

Follow the exercise up with an offer of a massage, this will send her oxytocin levels through the roof.

For more on this subject, including comfortable positions for sex while she is pregnant among other useful information and tips, we offer the e-book 'A Man's Guide to Sex and Intimacy in Pregnancy' for free.