



Sex After Baby

You're nursing, you're still wary about vaginal soreness, you have no time and you're exhausted from lack of sleep. Making love with your partner may seem like a long lost memory. For many women, the full flood of passion is slow to return after childbirth.

Your doctor will probably recommend that you wait at least three to four weeks before having sexual intercourse after the birth of your baby. If you have stitches from an episiotomy or tearing, it can take two weeks or longer for the area to heal.

Take Your Time

Intercourse is not the only way to experience intimacy.

Gradually easing your way back into making love may work better for you.

- Try giving each other massages or just cuddling and holding each other.
- Talk about making love.
- Let your partner know you're interested and thinking about him.
- Take two or three exploratory sessions with each other before having intercourse.
- If your interest in sex does not eventually return, talk to your doctor.

Getting Started

Every couple feels differently about resuming their sex lives. Give yourself room for feelings of fear and apprehension. Remember that having a newborn puts emotional and physical demands on your body.

- Make sure you let your partner know which areas feel sore.
- Choose a quiet time when your baby is asleep and you won't feel rushed.
- Consider making love during nap times. Nighttime may leave you too exhausted.
- Plan lots of time for foreplay.
- Some women experience a lack of natural lubricant after birth. Use a water-based lubricant to explore or make love.
- To control the depth of penetration, you may want to try lying on your side or being on top.
- If after lovemaking you feel sore, it's normal. You can use cool witch hazel compresses to soothe the area.

Fertility

It's hard to say when you'll ovulate or begin regular periods again, but be aware that you can become pregnant again as soon as you resume sexual intercourse. Breast-feeding is not a natural form of birth control; you can become pregnant while you're nursing. Barrier methods such as condoms and diaphragms are effective birth control methods that won't interfere with your milk production. But if you used a diaphragm before you had your baby, you should have it checked by your doctor to make sure it still fits properly.