Dear Alice,

I will be getting married in June. My fiancé and I are both virgins and intend to be until that night. How can I minimize the pain of first-time sex as well as maximize the pleasure of our honeymoon.

Answer

Dear Reader,

Congratulations on your upcoming nuptials! Getting married can be both exciting and scary for many couples, particularly if having sexual intercourse for the first time is a part of your wedding plans. People’s “first time” experiences can be romantic, exciting, sensual, fun, passionate, awkward, embarrassing, uncomfortable, disappointing, or any combination, so it’s understandable that you want to find out more about making your and your fiancé’s first intercourse together as pleasurable as possible.

To make the most out of your first experience, you may want to consider waiting until the morning or day after the wedding night when you are rested and ready to explore each other in a leisurely way, without fatigue or interruption. Depending on how sexually active you already are as a couple, you may want to leave extra time and energy to get to know each other’s bodies and pleasure zones before jumping into vaginal and/or anal intercourse. Experimenting with outercourse, mutual masturbation, and/or oral sex can help you sexually connect with your fiancé and can often be just as or more satisfying than intercourse. Learning how to touch and fully arouse each other before attempting vaginal penetration is a key step for minimizing any discomfort or pain and maximizing pleasure.

As you learn how your bodies fit together, you and your fiancé can try some of the following tips to help you boost your bed bliss:

- Focus on touching, kissing, and caressing each other in ways that heighten arousal before penetration.
- Try to relax and take it slowly.
- Talk with each other about what feels good and how you both like to be touched.
- Create a pleasure chest that includes water-based lube, condoms (if you aren’t using birth control and don’t want to get pregnant at this time), books about sex, and other products for sex play, such as massage lotion or oil, lingerie, an erotic movie or book,
and/or a vibrator. You may want to check out Toys in Babeland [2] for sex tips, toys, books and more.

- To help ease penetration, add a dab of water-based lube on the opening of the vagina and to the inside of the condom (if he is wearing one) before it is unrolled, and also to the outside of the penis or the condom. Reapply as often as necessary to ease any discomfort and increase pleasure.
- Experiment with various positions.
- If an erection goes away, remember it will most certainly come back.

While many women (and their partners) worry about discomfort or pain the first time they have vaginal intercourse, not all couples have this experience. If you do experience discomfort, communicate with your partner and make sure you are fully aroused, have enough lubrication? both her own or some extra? and are as relaxed as possible. If after these ideas, you still feel either discomfort or pain, try taking a break from intercourse; you can always try again later.

Lastly, remember that it's not uncommon for the first time to be less extraordinary than expected. Sometimes one or both partners do not orgasm. Other times, a man's erection might not last long or it might come and go, and a woman may be more lubricated and comfortable at some moments more than others. Being patient and taking your time, talking clearly, and learning/practicing are the best ways to allow the two of you to enjoy this newfound intimacy together. Even when the unexpected occurs, a couple's first experience can still be meaningful, positive, exciting, pleasurable, and/or fulfilling. A sense of humor goes a long way, and you have a lifetime together to learn.

Alice!
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