Dear Alice,

After being on birth control pills for the past two-and-a-half years, I stopped taking them because of side-effects. Since going off the pill, my boyfriend and I have been using condoms with an additional spermicide. The problem is that he is having a difficult time having an orgasm. He says that the condoms do not provide him with enough stimulation to be able to ejaculate. As a result of this dilemma, our sex life has become almost non-existent.

Could it be the type of condoms that we are using? We're using latex condoms. What can we do? Our sex life is riding on this!

Signed, No climax in this story

Answer

Dear No climax in this story,

If a person is used to having an orgasm in a particular way, any change may feel strange. Instead of looking at it as a problem, though, remind your boyfriend that a person has the ability to learn to orgasm in new ways – a potentially fun challenge.

Some men find it more pleasurable to use water-based lube on both the outside and the inside of a condom. This reduces friction and helps to provide a simulation of the warm, slippery vaginal environment. Also, definitely try different types of condoms – there are certainly differences between and among them, both in their thickness and shape. Your boyfriend can also try masturbating with a condom. Because masturbating to climax is something that is learned, he can teach himself to climax this way. If your partner needs more stimulation to come while he is wearing a condom, try touching, holding, grabbing, and rubbing his penis during intercourse. You can also try touching erogenous zones such as his scrotum or nipples, talking dirty to him, or using toys to enhance the fun, too.

Non-existent sex life? What about the myriad other ways to pleasure each other without intercourse? Read Spice up sex life? from the Go Ask Alice! archives for some suggestions.

There are also non-latex condom options you could try, such as polyurethane condoms. There are male and female versions of these. The female condom is inserted inside the vagina. Polyurethane is a type of plastic that’s thin, allows greater sensation, and conducts heat, so many people find it more pleasurable than latex. Lube is important to use with these
condoms to minimize distracting noises and reduce any friction.

Your boyfriend might be nervous about the condom’s reliability, and that stress can keep him from ejaculating inside you. Why not include him in any search you do for other birth control options, such as a diaphragm, cervical cap, or contraceptive sponge? That way, he'll also have confidence in whatever choice you select together. Your sex life can adjust with time, practice, and confidence.

Alice!
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