Am I pregnant? \[1\]

Dear Alice:

Yesterday I suddenly was hit with a feeling of intense weakness. It wasn't a stomachache, but a wave of weakness and nausea. I quickly went to a bathroom. Afterwards, I felt fine, but there was still a feeling of something moving around in my lower stomach (intestines?).

My immediate thought was that it was "morning sickness," a symptom of pregnancy. This seems impossible because I haven't been missing my period. If I did conceive, it could have happened only during last week. Wouldn't it be too early to tell? Also, are there pregnancy tests available at the Health Services in John Jay? If so, for what charge? Is it confidential? Do you recommend the store-bought home tests? When would those become effective (i.e., how many days/weeks after conception would the testing be accurate?)

Thanks a lot,
Anxious

Answer

Dear Anxious,

After having unprotected sex, the possibility of pregnancy may stir up a wide array of feelings and questions. No matter the circumstances, there's simply no way to know what the chances of being pregnant might be until you take a pregnancy test. And while nausea in the morning can certainly be a symptom of pregnancy, it and the "moving" feeling in your intestines could also be linked to having a stomach bug, food poisoning, a food sensitivity, the flu, or a number of other conditions.

Some women may experience physical signs of pregnancy like nausea or so-called "morning sickness" as soon as one to two weeks after conception, but others may not. For more details, take a look at Signs of early pregnancy and abortion info \[2\]. Keep in mind that early symptoms of pregnancy vary from woman to woman and pregnancy to pregnancy. Even if some signs point to "yes," there's no reason to assume you're pregnant until you take a pregnancy test and find out for sure.

You can test for pregnancy days after unprotected sex. Home pregnancy tests are accurate; just be sure to follow the instructions to the letter. Using a home pregnancy test is getting easier all the time. You used to need an early morning urine sample, but now you can do it at any time of the day, at almost any time in the cycle. A home pregnancy test is accurate seven
to ten days after unprotected intercourse. This is because the test cannot detect the human pregnancy hormone until about one to two weeks after conception. For more info on home pregnancy tests, check out Pregnancy test: how soon after sex? [3].

You can schedule a pregnancy test with a women's health care provider or visit Planned Parenthood [4] for more information about pregnancy tests and options.

If you or your partner suspects a pregnancy, taking a pregnancy test is the quickest and surest way to answer your questions. Even if the result is a surprise, being in the know will help you plan your next move.

Alice!
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