



Intimacy After Childbirth: Fact Sheet

The Challenges:

- In a 2000 study, 83% of women experienced sexual issues three months after delivery, and 64% experienced sexual issues six months after delivery. ¹
- In the same study, only 15% of women who had sexual problems following pregnancy reported it to their doctors. ¹
- A 2003 study demonstrated that women experiencing postpartum depression were significantly less likely to have resumed sexual activity during the time of the study than non-depressed women. ²
- The same 2003 study showed that 60% of women had not talked to anyone (partner or health care provider) about their sexual problems following pregnancy and delivery. ²
- The two most common questions for health care providers among mothers and fathers four months postpartum are “How soon after childbirth is birth control needed?” and “How soon do most couples resume intercourse after childbirth?” ³

Overcoming the Challenges:

- In the 2000 study from above, 89% of respondents had resumed sexual activity within six months following childbirth. ¹
- Women in a 2005 study experienced orgasm around 12 weeks after childbirth. ⁴
- Women with less invasive modes of childbirth with fewer complications tend to have fewer postpartum sexual side effects than women with invasive modes of delivery and more complications during childbirth. ⁵

We, at Pure Romance, feel that it is very important to take care of your body before, during, and after pregnancy and delivery. These statistics help reiterate the fact that while sexuality and sexual health may change during pregnancy, they will not be changed forever. To help maintain and improve your vaginal health before, during, and after pregnancy and childbirth, perform Kegel exercises, use a water-based vaginal lubricant, take things slowly, and remember that, with time, your body will regain some normalcy.

¹ Barrett, G et al. (2000). Women's Sexual Health after Childbirth. *British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 107(2).

² Morof, D. et al. (2003). Postnatal Depression and Sexual Health after Childbirth. *Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 102, 1318-1325.

³ Pastore, L. et al. (2007). Postpartum Sexuality Concerns among First-Time Parents from One U.S. Academic Hospital. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 4(1), 115-123.

⁴ Connolly, A. et al. (2005). Effects of Pregnancy and Childbirth on Postpartum Sexual Function: A Longitudinal Prospective Study. *International Urogynecology Journal*, 16(4).

⁵ Buhling, K. et al. (2006). Rate of Dyspareunia after Delivery in Primiparae According to Mode of Delivery. *European Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Reproductive Biology*, 124(1).

