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Shhhh... What no one ever tells you about sex p.134



Stop freaking out! Here's some totally reassuring sexual-health advice from ob/gyn Hilda Hutcherson, M.D.

Dr. Hutcherson is an ob/gyn and a professor at Columbia University in New York City. Email her at askhilda@redbookmag.com.

Q *I had an abnormal Pap for the first time, and my doctor wants to schedule a colposcopy. How worried should I be?*

A No need for panic. The Pap test checks for changes on the cervix that could lead to cervical cancer if left untreated, but an abnormal result is *not* the same as a cancer diagnosis. A vast majority of the time, an abnormal Pap is caused by something other than cancer, such as HPV (human papillomavirus) or herpes, which your doctor can monitor, or bacteria, which can be treated with medication. About the colposcopy: I know it sounds scary, but it's actually pretty simple and painless. Your doctor will use a microscope-like device to look more closely at your cervix to see if there are any abnormal cells that need to be biopsied to get a clearer picture of what's going on. Though some strains of HPV can lead to cancer, most do not, and your abnormalities may even go away on their own. Just be sure to ask your ob/gyn about follow-up care: You may need to get a Pap test every six months until the situation clears up.



Switch lubes for baby-making sex.

Q *Can using lube make it harder to get pregnant?*

A Absolutely. Lube might make sex more fun, but for some couples, it makes sex less fruitful. Water-based lubricants have been shown to decrease the movement of sperm, and make it harder for his swimmers to get where they need to go. The effect isn't strong enough to cause infertility, nor can lube be used as an effective contraceptive, but if you are already having trouble conceiving, using a water-based lubricant may make it even harder. That said, there's a lube called Pre-Seed that infertility specialists recommend, because it's been shown not to slow down sperm. Try that when you're trying.

CASE HISTORY SHE HAD ORGASMS IN HER SLEEP!



A foreplay-free orgasm might seem too good to be true to most of us, but I had one patient who came to me a bit unnerved when she started having intense climaxes in her sleep with no help from her husband. She was in her mid-40s, and felt embarrassed when she woke up one

morning mid-orgasm while he snoozed right next to her. She didn't remember whom or what she was dreaming about, and was surprised that she was able to climax in her sleep so easily when it was often hard for her to do so during sex. I reassured her that sexsomnia, or sexual activity

during sleep, is basically your body's way of practicing sexual response during the deep stages of REM sleep. I believe that all women occasionally have orgasms while they sleep, similar to the wet dreams men have—but most are not lucky enough to wake up in the middle or remember it!