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# COSMOPOLITAN

## EXPERTS

### sex advice

from Amy Levine, Cosmo's Carnal Counselor

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## "Is underwater sex safe?"

**Q** I've always wanted to have sex in the water, but are condoms still effective when you're submerged?

**A** Love in the tub (or ocean, pool or lake, etc.) may sound like fun, but as far as safe sex goes, it's a wash. For starters, condoms aren't tested in water, so there's no data about how chemicals, heat or other aquatic elements affect latex, polyurethane and lambskin. Latex condoms are especially iffy when used in the water because oil-based products (like tanning lotion, bubble bath and shampoo, which often end up submerged) erode them. Another underwater condom conundrum: H<sub>2</sub>O can seep in through the base of the prophylactic, causing it to slip off.

But it's not just the condoms you have to worry about. Water containing salt, chlorine or bacteria can be forced into the vagina by the in-and-out motion of penetration, which can lead to irritation or infection. The wet stuff also washes away spermicide and your natural lubrication, which can cause uncomfortable friction during sex.

So, if you really want to play it safe, limit your underwater lusty liaisons to foreplay and save the main event for dry land.

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