

All You Need to Know About Personal Lubricants

Every “body” is different, has different tolerance to friction, and a different biological environment. A lubricant can be used for penetrative sex, masturbation, and therapeutically for internal treatment and relaxation. Using the proper lubricant can help maintain the proper pH of your vaginal canal. Below is an easy-to-use, informational lubricant guide to assist in choosing the best one for your body.

Water Based Lubricants

PROS

- Water absorbs well into the skin
- Good for people with sensitive skin or skin that is easily irritated
- Can be used with condoms, dilators and sex toys

CONS

- Absorbs well into the skin so may need to be reapplied
- Does not work well if used in water, e.g. shower or bath
- Check ingredients – some may contain propylene glycol preservative, parabens, glycerin and/or sugar

Oil Based Lubricants

PROS

- Easily found around your home, e.g. olive oil, coconut oil, etc.
- Good for external massage

CONS

- Increases the chance of a condom breaking – the oil breaks down the latex and can create small holes in the condom
- Oils are harder for the vaginal canal to clean so can be associated with higher rates of infections, bacterial vaginosis, yeast and irritation

- Stains sheets and clothing

Silicone Based Lubricants

PROS

- Good alternative if you like the feeling of an oil-based lubricant
- Slippery and long lasting, less re-application

CONS

- May break down the rubber in silicone products – do NOT use with dilators, wands or sex toys
- Harder to clean off self, sheets, surfaces

Avoid

- Lubricants that have menthol, often advertised as “cooling” or “sensation enhancement” – menthol is an alcohol that can irritate skin
- Lubricants that have capsaicin, often advertised as “arousal enhancing” – capsaicin can set off pain nerves that can last longer than the intimate episode
- Lubricants that contain chlorhexidine – chlorhexidine can destroy protective genital bacteria
- Generally, avoid ingredients such as parabens, glycerin, and petroleum

The physiology behind lubricants and how they impact our body can be explained by the concept of OSMOLALITY. Osmolality is the concentration of particles dissolved in a unit of water. HOMEOSTASIS is the ability or tendency to maintain internal stability in an organism to compensate for environmental changes.

The tissues in our body and our vagina need to maintain homeostasis.

- If the osmolality is HIGH that means there are more particles per unit of water, which will cause the vaginal tissue to release its own moisture.
- The vaginal tissue will actually dry out trying to maintain homeostasis. Dried out tissue increases the risk of infection in the vaginal canal.

- The lower the osmolality the less irritating the lubricant may be to the tissue, as the vaginal tissue will retain moisture rather than release it.

The ideal lubricant is iso-osmotic which will most closely mimic the body's natural lubrication. The World Health Organization (WHO) suggests lubricants with an osmolality below 1200 mOsm/kg.

Our recommended short list of Lubricants:

Good Clean Love (water based)

Slippery Stuff (water based)

FDA approved on latex condoms

Sliquid (water based or silicone based)

Sutil Luxe (water based with hyaluronic acid)

Uberlube (silicone based)

FDA approved on latex condoms

Go LoveCBD (CBD infused and water based)

Femani Touch (silicone based)

FDA approved on latex condoms

Your take-away on lubricants

- Check the ingredients in the lubrication you are using, different people respond differently to types of lube.
- If something works well for a friend, it does not mean it will work well for you.
- Ask your pelvic floor physical therapist or a sexual educator for a recommendation. They can help you choose the lubricant for you, guiding you towards smoother and more comfortable intimacy.

Source:

<https://www.solsticept.com/blog/all-you-need-to-know-about-personal-lubricants>