

Revealed: The best sex positions for women with a bad back

- **Scientists at the University of Waterloo in Canada conducted first comprehensive study of how the spine moves during sex**
- **Found women with low-back pain made worse by arching their backs or lying on their stomachs should opt for sex in the missionary position**
- **Those who suffer pain when touching their toes or sitting for long periods of time should have sex 'doggy-style' to ease their pain**

By [Lizzie Parry for MailOnline](#)

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Scientists have mapped the best positions for women suffering back pain to have sex.

Despite the popular belief that 'spooning' is the best position for those suffering aches and pains, this new study dispels that theory.

The researchers at the University of Waterloo in Canada found depending on the type of low-back pain a woman experienced, doggy style or the missionary position were the best to ease pain.

Their findings - part of the first-ever study to document how the spine moves during sex - found 'spooning' was among the worst positions.

A new study by scientists at the University of Waterloo in Canada documented exactly how the spine moves during sex. They found contrary to popular belief 'spooning' is not the best position for those with back pain

The new recommendations, published in the European Spine Journal, come after comparable guidelines for men were released last month.

Natalie Sidorkewicz, who led the study, said: 'Traditionally, spooning was recommended by physicians to all individuals with back pain because it was thought to reduce nerve tension and load on the tissues.

'But when we examined spine motion and muscle activity, we found that spooning can actually be one of the worst positions for certain types of back pain.'

To compile their recommendations the team used pioneering research combining infra red and electromagnetic motion capture systems to track how 10 couples' spines moved while having sex in five common positions.

The results were used to create an atlas, or illustrated set of guidelines, that can be used to recommend different sex positions based on what movements trigger a patient's pain.

AND FOR MEN WITH BACK PAIN?

Last month, the same team revealed doggy-style is the best position for men suffering back pain.

Those findings, published in the journal Spine, recommended men who were flexion-intolerant should replace spooning with doggy-style.

They should also try a 'hip-hinging motion rather than thrusting with their spines', the authors said.

The atlas suggests that women who are extension-intolerant - meaning their back pain is made worse by arching their backs or lying on their stomachs - should replace spooning with the missionary position.

Adding a low-back support, such as a pillow, can also help keep the spine in a more neutral position.

For those women who are flexion-intolerant - those whose back pain is made worse by touching their toes or sitting for long periods of time - the atlas recommends doggy-style, where the woman supports her upper body with her hands, not her elbows, or spooning.

Ms Sidorkewicz said: 'What we know now is that sex positions that are suitable for one type of back pain are not appropriate for another kind of pain.'

'These guidelines have the potential to improve quality of life - and love life - for many couples.'

Four of every five people will experience at least one episode of disabling lower back pain in their lifetime, according to statistics.

Up to 84 per cent of men with low-back pain and 73 per cent of women report a significant decrease in the frequency of sex when suffering back pain.

The findings recommend women suffering low-back pain made worse by arching the back or lying on their stomach should opt for the missionary position, while those with pain aggravated by touching their toes or sitting for long periods of time, should have sex 'doggy-style'

Professor Stuart McGill, of the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at Waterloo, added: 'Primary care physicians report it is common for couples to seek their advice regarding how to manage their back pain during and after sex.'

'Many couples will remain celibate because the pain resulting from one night of lovemaking lasts months. Now doctors have solid science to guide their recommendations.'

He said the next phase of the study will involve recruiting patients with different categories of back and hip pain, as well as additional sex positions, to further develop the recommendations.

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