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Anteverted position of the uterus

Most of the time, you won't notice any symptoms of an anteverted uterus.If the tilt is extremely severe, you might feel pressure or pain in the front of your pelvis. Tell your doctor if you experience these symptoms.Does an anteverted uterus affect fertility and pregnancy?Doctors used to think that the shape or tilt of your uterus could affect your ability to get pregnant. Today, they know that the position of your uterus doesn't usually impact sperm's ability to reach an egg. In rare cases, an extremely tilted uterus may interfere with this process.Does an anteverted uterus affect sex?An anteverted uterus won't affect your sex life. You shouldn't feel any pain or discomfort during sex. But if you do, tell your doctor. Most women have an anteverted uterus (tilted forward), while some may have a retroverted or commonly called a "tipped uterus" (the uterus is tipped backwards). Hearing these two names for the first time may make you take a step back, but there is no reason to be worried. Whether you are trying to get pregnant or you recently found out how your uterus is positioned, understanding more about the varying positions of the uterus can help to set your mind at ease. Some questions that people ask, when they hear about it, may be: • Can I get pregnant? • Will it affect the health of the baby? • How does it happen? • Will it change the appearance of my pregnant belly? • Am I at risk? • Does it affect my menstruation cycle and cause pain? Following are answers to questions that you may have; BTW We wrote a follow-up article about the differences between retroverted and an anteverted uterus. You should check it out! Quick facts: an anteverted uterus is a uterus that is tilted forward, towards the bladder & your abdomen around 74 % of women have a uterus in an anteverted position the position of your uterus can change over the years First Things First, What is The Uterus (Womb)? The uterus, which means "womb" or "belly" in Latin, is an internal organ that has two main functions. Let me try to explain what those functions are and shed some light on common diseases that can impede its ability to function properly. The uterus is a "female reproductive organ located between the bladder and the rectum, in the pelvic area that looks like a pear found in a female's lower abdomen."(1,2) Interestingly, the uterus not only resembles a pear in terms of shape, but it is also approximately the size of a pear in a healthy woman. Functions The uterus' primary function is to "house" fetuses until they become fully developed and are ready to be delivered on their own or through induction. The second function of the uterus is menstruation. Menstruation can be thought of as cyclical preparation for pregnancy. In fact, the word menstruation actually means "monthly action or condition" in Latin. It refers to "normal vaginal bleeding that occurs as part of a woman's monthly menstrual cycle."(3) First, the ovaries, which look like two small eggs, release an actual egg. The egg then passes through the fallopian tubes, which are another set of reproductive organs. The fallopian tubes look like two flower stems that are attached to either side of the uterus. Once the egg reaches the uterus, hormones progesterone and estrogen trigger the lining of the uterus to prepare for pregnancy. The lining of the uterus thickens in response to the egg and hormones to allow for the secure implantation of a fertilized egg. If the egg is not fertilized during this time, the blood-infused lining detaches from the uterus and is expelled through the vagina as "period blood." Studies have shown that, on average, "most girls start menstruating shortly after age 12" in the U.S.(4) This first period is called menarche, and it can last anywhere from three to seven days. As indicated by its suffix, "pause," menopause marks the end of a woman's menstrual cycle. As of the date of this article, the average age for menopause among American women is "51 years."(5) Once a woman has become menopausal via nature or the surgical removal of her uterus, she is no longer able to have children. Diseases According to representatives of Cancer Treatment Services of America, cancer is the most common disease that affects the uterus.(6) There are, however, other diseases that may spread to the reproductive organs. Sexually transmitted diseases such as chlamydia and bacterial vaginosis are just two examples. Endometrial cancer is typically found in the endometrium, which is the inner layer of the uterus. As of the date of this article, endometrial cancer is "the most common type of uterine cancer."(7) Additionally, associates of the American Cancer Society have stated that more than 60,000 women will develop endometrial cancer this year.(7) They also suggest that more than 10,000 of those women will eventually succumb to the disease. Unfortunately, medical specialists have yet to discover exactly what causes endometrial cancer.(8) At present, it is believed that some genetic or acquired abnormality within an affected woman's body causes her to produce an excessive amount of anomalous cells. These cells slowly turn into malignant tumors inside and sometimes outside the uterus, which alters its shape and ability to function properly. There is, thankfully, a bit of good news. In some cases the cancerous tumors can be removed without having to remove the entire uterus. As indicated by its name, cervical cancer usually develops in the cervix and spreads up to the uterus. Technically, it is not uterine cancer; however, it does adversely affect the uterus once it begins to spread. What is an Anteverted Uterus? An anteverted uterus is a uterus that is tilted forward, towards the bladder and abdomen, while a retroverted uterus points backwards towards the rectum, according to zocdoc.(9) Many people, who aren't familiar with the word "anteverted", associate the name with something bad. Does it Affect Fertility? While hearing the word tilted uterus may cause questions in some people's minds, it is nothing to be worried about and doesn't effect fertility. An Anteverted Uterus is simply the way that a uterus develops and its position. The position of the uterus has no affect on a woman's ability to get pregnant or for the sperm to reach the Fallopian tubes.(10,11) Some women who are trying to get pregnant may think that laying on their stomach after intercourse will help them to conceive, but the position of the uterus that is anteverted has little to nothing to do with fertility. If you find that you are having a difficult time conceiving, you should visit your doctor to determine other causes of infertility. Is It Painful? Although a retroverted uterus may cause pain during intercourse or during menstruation, according to the Better Health Channel, the uterus that is tilted towards the abdomen is quite common in women and doesn't cause any issues.(12) If sex is painful with an anteverted uterus, it may be the cause of another condition that has nothing to do with the position of the uterus. How Does An Uterus Become Tilted? A tilted uterus is an anatomic development. Just as there is a vertical uterus and a retroverted uterus, there is the tilted or an anteverted uterus. While a retroverted uterus should be checked to ensure that its not a result of endometriosis or another underlying condition, there is no need to get checked if your uterus is anteverted. Your uterus may move from a mid-posed position to an anteverted position after pregnancy or with age and the weakening of muscles. How Common Is The Uterus In An Anteverted Position? An anteverted uterus is the most common positions of the uterus. In 2004 study of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Stanford School of Medicine, results showed that around 74 percent of women have an anteverted uterus, while 26 percent have a retroverted uterus.(13) If you discover that your uterus is anteverted, know that you are among the highest percentage of women with this type of uterus. Does it Affect Pregnancy? The uterus that is tilted towards the abdomen will have no adverse effect on pregnancy.(14, 15) In some rare cases, if the uterus is tilted very far forward, it may cause some discomfort for the woman when emptying the bladder, but otherwise it is nothing to be concerned about. For women with a retroverted uterus, they may experience more back pain.(12) Most problems associated with uterus position during pregnancy would be due to an extremely retroverted uterus. Women can get pregnant and carry their babies without any issues. Can it Change Position? A woman's uterus may change position after pregnancy due to weight gain and extra pressure on her organs during pregnancy, but it doesn't affect her health or chances of getting pregnant again. If an anteverted uterus changes position to a retroverted position, this may be the result of health conditions such as endometriosis or pelvic inflammatory disease. Sometimes an accident or trauma can cause a re-positioning of the uterus. A woman may experience a re-positioning of her uterus post-pregnancy. Does it Effect The Way a Woman Shows During Pregnancy? An anteverted uterus may show sooner than a retroverted uterus. The baby bump may start to show as soon as before the 12th week mark on a woman whose uterus is tilted forward. In contrast, a retroverted uterus may not show for up to the first four months due to its backwards positioning. Does The Uterus In An Anteverted Position Affect Menstruation? Unlike the retroverted uterus, it will not cause any abnormal pain during menstruation. The uterus that is tilted towards the abdomen is a very common position for the uterus and women live without pain associated with the position of their uterus. If a woman suffers from excruciating pain during her period, she should visit her OBY/GN to find out the cause. What Does It Mean When I See The Words on A Physical Exam? While a doctor may include the information in the results of an exam, it means nothing more than a description of how your uterus is positioned. In Conclusion - It Is Nothing To Worry About While it is important to understand the anatomy of your own body and it doesn't hurt to discover which type of uterus you have, the uterus in an anteverted position is the most common position of the uterus and will have little to no effect on your life or on your ability to get pregnant. Comparatively speaking, the position of the uterus is as natural as the length of one's nose or height. While a retroverted uterus does require more attention than an anteverted uterus, the position of the uterus is a natural development and should be treated as such. Things to Remember » An anteverted uterus that is very tilted forward may affect your bladder during pregnancy. » It is not an abnormality, but simply an anatomical development. » Pain associated with your uterus may be due to a medical condition that moves your uterus's position backwards. A visit with your gynecologist can determine if you need treatment. » The position of your uterus can change over the years due to aging, pregnancy, or accidents. In conclusion, the uterus is a remarkable organ! To ensure that it functions as it should, health care specialists now advise women to submit to annual pap smears starting at age 21. The pap smear is a relatively painless procedure in which medical experts collect a sample of their client's cervical fluid to make sure it the cervix is free of abnormal cells. » learn more about 5 reasons why you should breast-feed your baby • check why experts still advise that pregnant women should exercise References and resources 1.Uterus, Medically reviewed by Healthline Medical Team on March 30, 2015 2.Human Organs Diagram Symbols, Copyright EdrawSoft 3.About Menstruation,NICHHD, Content OwnerOffice of Communications Last Reviewed Date 1/31/2017 4.First Menstruation: Average Age and Physical Signs Karen Sarpolis, MD Nov 18, 2011 5.Menopause (Symptoms, Remedies, and Treatment Medications) Medical Author:Melissa Conrad Stöppler, MD, Chief Medical Editor Medical Editor: William C. Shiel Jr., MD, FACP, FACR 6.Types of uterine cancer,Cancer Treatment Center 7.Endometrial Cancer American Cancer Society, Inc. 8.Endometrial cancer By Mayo Clinic Staff 9.What is an anteverted uterus? 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RAINE-FENNING, Ultrasound Obstet Gynecol 2011;38: 371 - 382 Published online in Wiley Online Library (wileyonlinelibrary.com).DOI:10.1002/uog.10056 Uterine position in the pelvis is defined by two angles. The first one is the angle between the axis of the uterine body and axis of the cervix, called flexion. The second represents the relation between the axis of the cervix and the axis of the vagina, and it is called version. Having this in mind, there are four different positions of the uterus which can be determined by transvaginal or transabdominal ultrasound. By the natural position of the uterus in the pelvis, doctors consider antelexion with anteversion. Cervix represents the lower part of uterus about 2 inches long, and it is located between the vagina and the uterine body. The uterine body is the upper part of uterus shaped like a pear and sits at the top of the cervix. Another name for uterine body is fundus. Women who have had a baby can have a larger fundus, whereas those who haven't had a baby and are in menopause, can have it a smaller in size. A number of ligaments are responsible for attaching cervix and fundus to the pelvic sidewalls. They are flexible, thus allowing the uterus to tilt backward or forward leading to disorder in natural position inside the pelvis. Characteristics Of Uterus Look As already mentioned, uterus is shaped like a pear. Its measures are: 7.5cm in length, 5cm width, and depth is 2.5cm. The wall of the uterus consists mainly of a thick muscle, covered by an endothelium called endometrium, limiting uterine cavity. This cavity is located inside the fundus and it is the part where fertilized egg will grow into the baby. This cavity is closed by the cervix, thus separated from the vagina. Position Four different position uterus can take inside the pelvis is anteversion, antelexion, retroversion, and retroflexion. Anteversion means that the whole uterus (cervix and fundus) is leaning forward, over the top of the urinary bladder. Contrary, retroversion means that the uterus leans away from the bladder, towards the rectum. This does not necessarily lead to problems in women's life since it only represents variation in position without the change in the uterine structure. The third term that appears describing the position of uterus along with anteversion and retroversion is mid-pose, meaning that the uterus doesn't lean. It stands up, exactly between the urinary bladder and the rectum. It is estimated that approximately 50% of women have an anteverted uterus, although severity and the degree of this variation may vary. In most cases normal reproductive function is not at risk. Why Is This Happening? Movement Of Organs Although there is not a concise explanation to this question, doctors specify it has a lot to do with the anatomy and the type of the body. There is a lot of space inside the pelvis allowing the organs to shift their position rubbing against one another which can result in impair uterine placement and its axis. Bladder Pressure In most cases girls are born with a midposed uterus, which during the growth and development tilts to one side. Pressure from a growing bladder more often causes the uterus to lean forward. The anteverted position of the uterus occurs more often in comparison to retroverted, which is caused by the pulling of the uterus from the rectum. Pregnancy Pregnancy and childbirth may also be the reason for the uterus to lean towards the urinary bladder. During the pregnancy, thick uterine muscle wall stretches and grows multiple times, allowing the growth of the baby. This growth combined with the position of the baby can cause tipping of the uterus. Great physical intensity and pressure provoked during the birth may cause ligament holding the uterus in the position, to weaken. This may result in leaning forward. Aging All the changes in the uterus and the surrounding pelvic structures, caused by the pregnancy and process of giving birth, may resolve and the uterus may come back to its natural state. However, in some women these changes remain for good. During the physiological process of aging all tissues in the body become softer and weaker. Same is with the uterine muscles and the ligaments keeping it in place, resulting in position shift. This shift is even more expressed in women in which postpartum changes did not resolve, leading to even more tilting. The Question Of Fertility We are naturally not aware of the position of our internal organs. The same applies to the position of the uterus. In most cases, women do not know they have developed forward tipped uterus. The anteverted uterus is most often considered just as a biological change of the organ positioning and has nothing to do with the fertility of the woman or with her general sexual health. In order for pregnancy to happen, spermatozoids have to pass the uterine cavity and reach Fallopian tubes. There is no evidence assuming that this process is dependent on the manner in wich uterus is placed. When extreme leaning of the uterus occurs it may cause discomfort which is especially expressed in the late stages of the pregnancy. The gynecologist should easily diagnose this state during an ultrasound or other routine checkups. This state can sometimes be related to the miscarriage and serious problems during childbirth, but usually, it is not related to major problems. Data collected during regular check-ups and ultrasound examinations are very helpful to the doctor leading the pregnancy in order to plan a further course of pregnancy and other needed procedures. Every problem or disorder during the pregnancy is indicated that medical help is needed. However, when diagnosed with anteverted uterus it is not necessarily something to worry about, while it is a rare cause of problems with fertility or general health. Most often it is just a physiological variation. If you have some information you think others may benefit from, feel free to share in the comments below.

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