

Just Say Yes



CPS

Coalition for Positive Sexuality

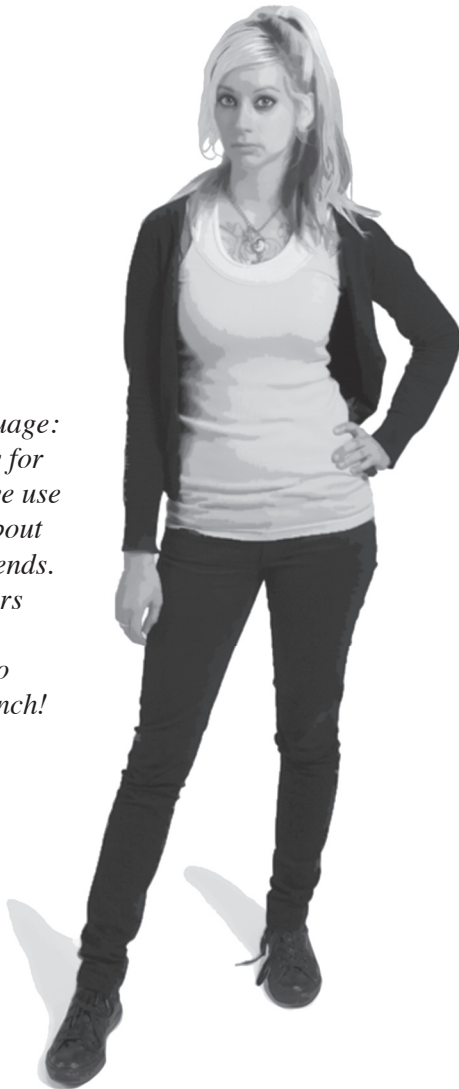
Just Say Yes

... means having a positive attitude about sexuality — gay, straight, bi, or whatever. It means saying “yes” to sex you do want, and “no” to sex you don’t. It means there’s nothing wrong with you if you decide to have sex, and nothing wrong with you if you decide not to.

You have the right to make your own choices, and to have people respect them.

Sex is enjoyable when everyone involved is into it, and when everyone has the information they need to take care of themselves and each other.

*About our language:
We chose words for
this book that we use
when we talk about
sex with our friends.
We’re not doctors
and we don’t
pretend to be, so
pardon our French!*



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Coalition for Positive Sexuality (CPS)

PO Box 77212, Washington, DC 20013

773-604-1654

positive@positive.org

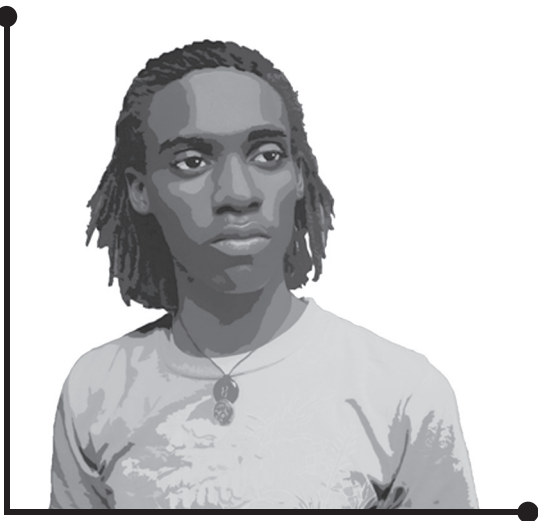
Glossary

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is when your body's immune system has been weakened by HIV and is unable to fight off certain infections and diseases. See *Safe Sex* pages for more information.

BDSM is a combination of three terms: BD (Bondage & Discipline), DS (Dominance & Submission), and SM (Sadism & Masochism). BDSM includes a wide range of activities involving safe, sane, consensual playing with erotic power games. BDSM is *not* about abuse. Everyone involved understands and plays by the rules.

BI (BISEXUAL)* people feel sexual and/or romantic attraction to people of any sex.

The **CLIT (CLITORIS)** is the main sexual pleasure spot for women. To find your clitoris, feel inside the top of your crotch for a button-like thing. Rubbing or licking the clit gives women pleasure, and makes the clit hard. In fact this is the main way most women cum.



CONSENT (CONSENSUAL SEX) is when all partners say “yes” to having sex and mean it. Everyone agrees on what they’re going to do, and anyone can make it stop. Saying “no” or saying nothing at all is not consent.

CUMMING (ORGASM) is the extreme feeling of pleasure during sex. Both women and men are able to have orgasms. Remember, women, the clit is it!

GAY (HOMOSEXUAL)* men feel sexual and/or romantic attraction mostly to other men.

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the virus that causes AIDS. HIV+ (HIV POSITIVE) means that your blood shows signs of HIV as detected by a lab test. See *HIV Testing* page for more information.

INTERCOURSE is when something (a dick, finger, dildo, cucumber, whatever) penetrates your butt, which is anal sex, or your vagina, which is vaginal sex. Both women and men can enjoy anal intercourse.

LESBIAN (HOMOSEXUAL)* women feel sexual and/or romantic attraction mostly to other women.

MASTURBATION is getting off by touching yourself.

ORAL SEX is licking, sucking, biting (not too hard, please!) your partner’s thang.

STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) & STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections) are diseases you can get when you have certain types of sex without using protection. See *Safe Sex* and *STDs and STIs* pages for more information.

STRAIGHT (HETEROSEXUAL)* people feel sexual and/or romantic attraction mostly to people of the other sex.

TRANSGENDER* is a term that includes people who feel, act, or dress in ways usually associated with the other gender. Transgender people can be heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or whatever.



**Remember these are just words that people use to identify ourselves or others. Our sexualities are more complicated than these words, and we decide if we want to use these words, make up our own, or use none at all.*

Pro-Sex

Sex is everywhere—on beer commercials, billboards, and in music lyrics. But most messages we get tell us that sex is something dirty that we shouldn't talk about or an act of violence. Most of us learn that our bodies, and our sex, are things to be ashamed of. Most of us learn that sex means a man on top of a woman, and that the only other choice is abstinence.

But sex can be lots of things, not just intercourse.

**Women have sex with women,
men have sex with men, women
have sex with men—and
sometimes the best sex is with
yourself!**

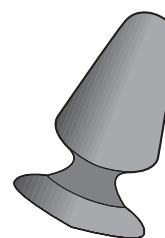
There are lots of safe and fun ways to get off, which you probably won't learn in school. You can do many of these things all by yourself as well as with others, and you can talk about them even if you don't want to do them. Don't feel like you have to do everything on the next page, but don't feel like anything is automatically off limits either. The important thing is that everyone involved clearly says what they want and can make it stop when they want.

**Just remember,
sex is only fun
if everyone
agrees on what
they're going
to do.**



You could . . .

- suck, kiss, touch, bite, fondle, nibble, squeeze, and lick someone's body, nipples, calves, toes, neck, ass, dick or vulva . . .
- jack/jill yourself off or each other off, dry or using lots of lubricant . . .
- kiss for a long time, using lots of tongue . . .
- have sex in front of mirrors, or watch each other jacking/jilling off . . .
- get into role play (for instance, tie someone up and pleasure them) . . .
- look at sexy pictures and videos . . .
- make up or act out fantasies, talk dirty, dress up, strip down, or cross-dress (dressing in the clothes of the other gender) . . .
- call your friend and tell him or her your hottest fantasies . . .
- use vibrators, cock rings, or nipple clamps (or clothespins) on your own or someone else's body . . .
- shower together, or grind against each other with your clothes on (dry humping) . . .
- cum *on* someone's belly, back, feet, chest—instead of *in* them . . .
- play with your own or someone else's ass or vagina, put your fingers, dildos, vegetables, or butt plugs into them. If you're putting something into a butthole, make sure it has a flared base and looks something like this



That way it can't go in all the way.

It's important to play safe. Use condoms and plastic wrap. Don't get blood or cum in a wound. See Safe Sex pages for more information.

Myth & Reality

Since our society is so afraid to talk honestly about sex, you've probably heard a lot of bad things about it. Here are some myths we're tired of hearing—heard any of these lately?

MYTH: *Masturbation will make you blind, hairy, or sterile.*

REALITY: Masturbation is the safest form of sex and sometimes the most fun. Remember women: The CLIT is IT!

MYTH: *Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people aren't normal. They're perverts.*

REALITY: There is nothing wrong with being gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Millions of people are. Whether you know it or not, some of your friends, family, teachers, and neighbors are queer.

MYTH: *Men need sex more than women. Women who like sex are sluts.*

REALITY: Get real. Everybody has sexual needs. Enjoying sex is perfectly fine. That's what it's all about!



MYTH: *You won't get AIDS if you're in love with your sex partner, or you're both faithful, or neither of you thinks you're at risk.*

REALITY: Only safe sex can prevent AIDS. Monogamy, marriage, being on the pill, or "family values" won't protect you.

MYTH: *Lesbians don't have to worry about safe sex.*

REALITY: Women can pass STDs, STIs, and HIV to women they have sex with, even if neither partner has ever slept with a man.

MYTH: *You can tell if someone has an STD, HIV, or AIDS just by looking at them.*

REALITY: The only way to know if you or someone else has an STD, HIV, or AIDS is to be tested. You cannot tell by someone's "healthy" or "unhealthy" appearance.

MYTH: *We don't have to worry about AIDS anymore because new drugs can cure it.*

REALITY: New treatments help people with AIDS live better and longer, but there's still no cure for AIDS. Plus, the new drugs don't work for some people.

Let's Talk About SEX

You probably already have an idea of what things you feel comfortable doing. Now the important thing is to tell your partner about it and find out what they want, too. Getting started is probably the hardest part.

Pick a good time, take a deep breath, and just talk about it.

You might find that talking actually turns you on and can help you feel more comfortable during sex.

No matter what you've done or decided before, you always have the right to change your mind. No one can make you do something you don't want to. You always have the right to say no and to have your partner lay off immediately.



The point is, talk about sex! Share what you know with your partner, your friends, and even your parents and teachers if you can.

No matter what you and your partner agree on doing, you can always be safe. There are lots of things you can do without the help of latex. But for other stuff, you're going to need condoms or plastic wrap or gloves or all of them (see *Safe Sex* pages). And don't assume your partner knows as much about safe sex as you do. So talk about it.

One guy we know has his own personal rule: he makes sure that the topic has come up and the condom has come out before his zipper comes down. Another friend makes up great safe sex fantasies and tells them to her partners.

Be yourself!

There's a lot of pressure to be cool and fit in. *Has anyone ever tried one of these lines on you?*

"But everybody's doing it."

"You say no, but I know you really want it."

"You're not really gay. You haven't met the right girl yet."

"You mean you're still a virgin?!"

"You can't have sex during your period. It's gross."

"What's the matter? Are you a lezzie or something?"

"What do you mean, *no*? We had sex last time."

"Bisexuals are just confused."

"I was drunk so it didn't really matter."

"If you love me, you'll do it."

It's hard to be different from your friends, or to make different choices. But what your friends choose to do may not be what *you* want. Whether you call yourself lesbian, straight, bi, or gay, people are more complicated than these categories and more interesting than those lines.

Respect

Respect Yourself

If you think you might be queer, relax! Everyone has questions about their sexuality at some time or another, and exploring your sexual feelings is important and exciting. There's no test to tell you if you're bisexual, lesbian, straight, transgender, or gay. You're the only person who can figure out your own sexuality, based on your physical and emotional attraction to people. If you're not sure of you're sexual identity, just stay tuned to your sexual feelings and see what they tell you.

You're also the only one who can decide which words best describe your sexual identity. You don't even have to decide on a label to call yourself. Or you can make up your own name for your sexuality.

Your sexuality is totally unique to you, and it's yours to enjoy, not to worry about!

If you think you are queer, try to find a lesbian/bisexual/gay/transgender community center near you, where you can meet other queers your age. Check in our *Resources* pages for places to call. Take some time deciding if or when you want to "come out" (tell people that you're queer). Be proud of who you are!



Demand Respect

Everyone is endangered by violence, but some people are targets just because of who they are. Just as harassing people because of their skin color or religion is bullshit, so is attacking women, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, or people with AIDS. If you have a problem with people who are different than you—gay, straight, with AIDS, or whatever—get over it! Give respect, and demand respect from other people.

PHYSICAL ASSAULT is beating, hitting, kicking, or otherwise hurting someone. Nobody has the right to assault you—not even your parents or the person you date.

QUEER-BASHING is when someone physically or verbally assaults you because they think you're transgender, lesbian, bisexual, or gay.

RAPE is when anyone is forced to have sex when they have not agreed to. When you hear no, that means no.

DATE RAPE or **ACQUAINTANCE RAPE** is when anyone is forced to have sex with someone they know (and often, trust).

ABUSIVE INCEST is when anyone is forced to have sex of any kind with a family member. This happens most often to young people, who are told to keep quiet about it.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT—unwanted comments, whistles, sexual gestures, or touching—is also violence.

If you are a victim of violence:

1. **Tell someone you trust.**
2. **Get help.** There are several groups listed in the *Resources* pages that can help you. If you've been raped, assaulted, queer-bashed, or sexually harassed, call one of these groups *before* you call the police, if you can.
3. **Remember that it is not your fault.** You did not ask for it, you do not deserve it, and you have a right to respect. If you want to, press charges or file a report with the police.

Safe Sex

Nobody has a body to die for.

Safe sex is always better! It's fun, and you don't have to worry as much.

Safe sex means making sure you don't get anyone else's blood, semen, vaginal fluids, or breast milk in your body—and protecting your partners too! Latex condoms, surgical gloves, and plastic wrap are the only ways to protect yourself and your partner from STDs and HIV, but they're not foolproof. You've got to use them correctly every time you have sex.

You can get HIV and STDs even if you're not having intercourse. It can't hurt to cover all the bases — with latex, that is!

Condoms

Always use a condom.

If you're going to suck your partner's dick (blowjob), put a condom on it first. Try non-lubricated or flavored condoms for this. Whatever you do, don't get semen (cum) in your mouth, because you could get an STD or HIV that way. If you have a sore throat or small cuts on your gums (say from brushing your teeth), there's a risk of HIV going from the semen into your blood stream.



If you're doing someone with a sex toy—vegetable, dildo, vibrator, or whatever—put a condom on that thing! Don't switch the toy from butthole to vagina, or from one person's body to another, until you put a new condom on it.

Some people think that putting on a condom is too much work when you're supposed to be having fun. But it's easy for condoms to be really fun and erotic.

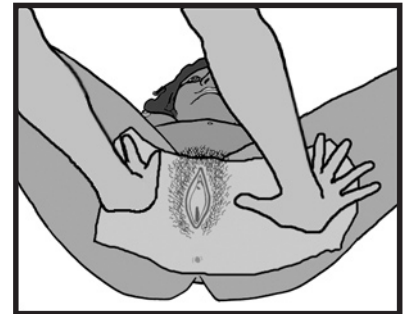
Be creative!

Latex Gloves

Putting your fingers or fist in your partner's vagina or butthole (finger fucking or fisting) is safe as long as you don't have cuts or sores on your hands and your partner is not on her period. The safest way to do it is to wear a latex surgical glove (not a dish washing glove) and use lots of water-based lube. You can get latex surgical gloves at the drugstore.

Plastic Wrap

If you're going to be licking your partner's vulva and clit (eating out), use a piece of plastic wrap to be safe. Yes!



All you need is some plastic wrap, or a condom cut down the side and laid flat. Be sure to cover the entire crotch. You could put some honey or jam on your side of the plastic wrap and just eat away! Also, putting some lube on the other side of the plastic wrap may make it even more fun for her. But never flip the plastic over while you're eating out. If you're going to move from one partner to another or from butthole to vulva, use a new piece.

It's especially important to use plastic wrap if your partner is having her period. Menstrual blood can carry HIV and STDs.

If you're going to be licking your partner's butthole (rimming), cover it with plastic wrap, too. This keeps you safe from harmful bacteria and STDs. A **dental dam** is a square piece of latex that you can use just like plastic wrap. You can get dental dams at condom stores, dentists' offices, and some drugstores.

You can still safely do almost everything else that turns you on — kissing, stroking, massaging, grinding . . .

Safe Sex

Guys, practice putting on a condom in a comfortable place where you have plenty of time by yourself. You know what we mean! Practice makes perfect, and you will impress your partner. Girls, practice putting a condom on a banana.



The best condoms for vaginal and anal intercourse are lubricated latex condoms.

We do not recommend lambskin condoms because they don't block HIV and STDs. If you're allergic to latex you can use polyurethane condoms. Using lubricant will make things go smoother and give you added protection. Lube is especially great for a woman's first time having intercourse or if she tends to get sore. But always use a water-based lube (such as KY Jelly, Astroglide, Wet, or Probe). Oil breaks latex. Don't use Vaseline, hand creams, or lotions as a lubricant. Also, treatments for yeast infections contain oil and will break latex. Oil is good for salads and cars, not for sex! You can buy water-based lube and condoms at the drugstore.

Here's how you put on a condom:

1. **Get ready.** Make sure your condoms are fresh—check the expiration date. Throw away expired condoms or any that have been very hot, carried around in your wallet, or washed in the washer. If you think the condom might not be good, get a new one. You and your partner are worth it.
2. That dick has to be hard before you put a condom on it.
3. **Open it.** Tear open the package carefully, so you don't rip the condom. Careful if you use your teeth.
4. If the penis is uncut (uncircumcised), pull the foreskin back first.
5. **Make sure the condom is right side out.** It's like a sock: there's a right side and a wrong side. First unroll it about half an inch to see in which direction it is unrolling. Then put it on. It should unroll easily down your dick. If you start off wrong, try again with a new condom. You'll see when you practice.
6. **Hold the top half-inch of the condom** between your fingers when you roll it down. This keeps out air bubbles, which can cause the condom to break. It also leaves space at the end of the condom for cum.
7. **Roll the condom down** as far as it will go. It should reach the base of the penis near the balls.
8. For anal intercourse, **use lots of lube.** Water-based lube is great for vaginal intercourse, too. Put the lube on after you put on the condom, not before—the condom could slip off. Add more lube often. Dry condoms break more easily.
9. Guys—**when you pull out, hold the condom near your balls** so it doesn't slip off. Try to pull out while you're still hard. Take the condom off only after you are completely out of your partner.
10. **Throw out the used condom right away.** Use a condom only once. Never use the same condom for vaginal and anal intercourse. Never use a condom that has been in, or used by, someone else. Never cum more than once in the same condom.

AIDS

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the virus that causes AIDS. When someone has HIV (is HIV+), their body has a hard time fighting off infections and diseases. *Anybody can get HIV.*

You should know that nowadays at least 25% of people who find out they have AIDS are in their 20s. These people probably got HIV when they were in high school, because it can take years for an HIV+ person to develop AIDS.

HIV is transmitted from a person with HIV to another person when certain body fluids are mixed—blood (including menstrual blood), semen, vaginal fluid, and breast milk.

This is how you CAN get HIV:

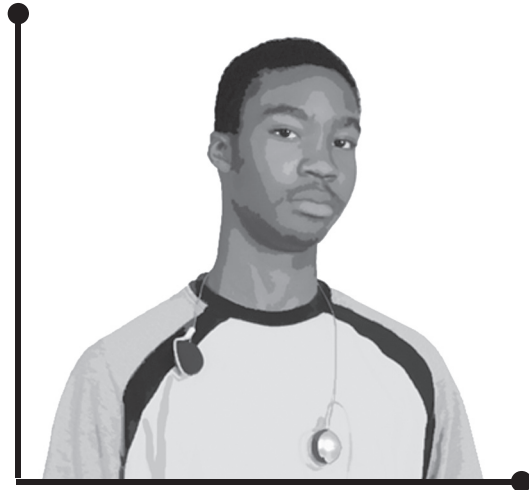
- having vaginal or anal intercourse without a condom with an HIV+ person
- having oral sex (licking someone’s vulva, butthole, or dick) without a condom or plastic wrap with an HIV+ person
- sharing needles for shooting drugs, piercing, or tattooing with an HIV+ person
- from an HIV+ mother to child during pregnancy, birth, and breast feeding
- receiving a blood transfusion (luckily HIV is rarely transmitted this way anymore)

You CAN’T get HIV from:

- kissing, sweat, tears
- hugging
- food
- toilet seats
- swimming pools
- giving blood



HIV is a virus, and viruses don’t discriminate. It doesn’t matter who you are—gay, straight, or bi—you can get HIV if you have unsafe sex. Don’t believe it when people say “just be monogamous” or “choose your partners carefully.” It doesn’t matter how well you know somebody, how much sex you have, or how many people you do it with.



What matters is how you do what you do.



Treating HIV/AIDS

There is no cure for HIV/AIDS, but there are treatments. People with AIDS often take a combination of prescription drugs that may reduce the amount of virus in their bodies. Taking the drugs as prescribed is important, as the virus can build resistance. No long-term information is known. Some people do not benefit from these treatments.

HIV Testing

You can never tell who's got HIV. Anyone can be HIV+ and not know it—including you.



People who are HIV+ can speak any language, be old or young, gay or straight or bi, skinny or hunky or curvy.

It's a good idea to get tested if you think you were exposed to HIV. However, it can take 3 months or longer to test positive once you've been exposed to HIV. Also, the test may not pick up the virus antibodies (this is called a "false positive" or "false negative"). So be sure to get retested. Even if you test HIV-, that doesn't mean you can have unsafe sex

If you test positive, don't freak out. People live for many years after becoming HIV+, and still work, go to school, and enjoy sex. But they have to take special care of their health. We recommend people with HIV contact a support agency (see *Resources* pages).

If you test HIV+, the counselor will probably ask if you want help telling your partner(s) and your family. Remember that this information is *yours* and no one can force you to tell anyone else, but it will help to talk to people you trust.

If you decide to get an HIV test:

INVOLUNTARY: It is usually against the law for anyone—your parents, your doctor, your school, or your employer—to force you to take an HIV test. If you think you've been tested without your consent, call a local AIDS organization to get legal advice, or call the ACLU AIDS Project (212-549-2627).

CONFIDENTIAL: This is when the people testing you know your name or anything else about who you are. Usually they promise they won't reveal your HIV status to anyone else, but if you test positive there's no guarantee. If you are under 18 years old they may tell your parents or legal guardian. Insurance companies and future employers may also find out.

Make sure the people testing you for HIV tell you *exactly* where they'll send information about you. Many states have "mandatory name reporting" laws. Usually these laws require health clinics to report an HIV+ person's name to the state's Department of Health. This information should only be used for statistics. If you test HIV+, you should still seek treatment, even if you live in a state that requires name reporting.

To find out if your state requires mandatory name reporting, call your local Department of Health or go to the ACLU website: www.aclu.org.

ANONYMOUS: *This is the way to go if you want an HIV test.* Call the local Department of Health, a local AIDS organization, or the AIDS Info Hotline (1-800-448-0440) to find out where to get a free anonymous test. When you call a clinic to make your appointment, make sure the test will be anonymous. You should not have to give your name, social security number, phone number, or any other personal information.

When you go, you may want to bring a friend with you, but it's OK to go alone. You should get pre-test counseling there and time to ask questions. After the test, you'll get an appointment to come back for your results. You should also have post-test counseling at your return visit, whether you tested HIV+ or HIV-.

HOME HIV TEST KIT: This is a test you can buy in a drugstore or order over the phone (see *Resources*). The test costs about \$45. It is completely anonymous. You prick your finger and put a few drops of blood on a test card. Then you mail it to the company lab to be tested. You can call and get your results in three to seven days. When you call for your results, don't give your name, give the code number on the test kit. You should repeat the test in six months. Counseling is available over the phone, but we think it's much better to be tested in a clinic with face-to-face counseling.

STDs & STIs

While it is normal and healthy for people to enjoy active sex lives, there are more than 30 sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) that can make things unpleasant.

Every year *2.5 million U.S. teenagers* get STDs and STIs. Nobody is immune. Practice safe sex, so you won't have to worry about STDs & STIs, and sex will be a lot more fun.

Symptoms	STD / STI	Treatment
women usually have none; men have pain/burning when urinating, yellow discharge	Chlamydia	antibiotic to kill bacteria
severe itching	Crabs or Pubic Lice*	prescription or over-the-counter lotion (Kwell)
red bumps/blisters in genital area; pain or burning when peeing	Genital Herpes	pills & ointment for symptoms but no cure
may have none; bumpy warts on, inside, or near genitals or anus	Genital Warts or HPV	some treatments but no cure; new vaccine
pain/burning when urinating; yellow discharge; sometimes no symptoms	Gonorrhea	antibiotic to kill bacteria
yellow skin, abdominal pain, nausea/vomiting	Hepatitis B & C*	pills, shots for symptoms but no cure; vaccine
small white or skin colored bumps on skin, sometimes around genital/anal area	Molluscum Contagiosum*	pills, removal of bumps, or clears up on its own
unusually long or painful periods; cramping or pain in pelvic or abdominal area	Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (women only)*	antibiotics
line of small red spots—very itchy	Scabies*	prescription or over-the-counter lotion (Kwell)
painless open sores, rash, genital ulcers, flu-like symptoms	Syphilis	antibiotic to kill bacteria
smelly or funny-colored discharge, itching	Vaginal Infections*	antibiotics
itching, discharge, soreness in genital area	Yeast Infections*	Monistat or other over-the-counter treatments

** Not always sexually transmitted – can get it without having sex.*

You may not have all of these symptoms or you may have other symptoms, like abdominal pain. *Women often have no symptoms*, so it's important to have a pelvic exam every year. Men and women who are having anal sex can ask for a rectal exam. If you think you may have been exposed to any STDs or STIs, see a healthcare provider and ask what to do. Check the *Resources* pages for STD testing and women's clinics.

Most of these are serious. They have dangerous consequences and need medical care. STDs and STIs can make you unable to have children, cause birth defects, and increase your chances of getting cancer. For women, pelvic inflammatory disease and yeast infections that keep coming back can be early signs of HIV infection. And AIDS, hepatitis B & C, and syphilis can kill.

Birth Control

Both of you are responsible for birth control. Do not rely on your partner to provide it. Guys—don't assume she's on the pill! Women—don't assume he's got a condom!

No matter what kind of birth control you use, always use a condom too, because condoms help to protect you from getting HIV and sexually transmitted diseases.

Available at drugstores:

CONDOM/RUBBER: Looks like a rubber sock for your dick. We recommend latex or polyurethane condoms, because lambskin condoms don't block HIV and STDs. If you think you might be allergic to latex see the *Troubleshooting* page.



Using a water-based lubricant during sex can prevent the condom from breaking and help prevent vaginal soreness/irritation. (Please see *Safe Sex* page for important tips on using condoms.)

FEMALE CONDOM: A plastic (polyurethane) pouch held inside the vagina with a flexible plastic ring. It's less effective than the male condom in preventing STD's and pregnancy, and it's more expensive. But, if you're allergic to latex, this might be a good alternative (see *Troubleshooting* page).



Some women prefer it, others find it bulky. You can't use it for anal sex, and we don't recommend using it with a sex toy.

MORNING-AFTER-PILL: A series of pills, also called Emergency Contraception (EC) or Plan B, that you must take within five days (120 hours) after unprotected sex (vaginal intercourse). It is only for emergencies and has some side effects. If you are 18 or older, you can get Plan B at the drugstore without a prescription. If younger, you need to get a prescription from a health clinic.

For more info call the EC Hotline at 1-888-NOT-2-LATE or go to www.not-2-late.com.



SPONGE: A small sponge with spermicide in it that you insert into the vagina. Spermicide may irritate your skin and vagina leading to a higher risk of getting UTIs (Urinary Tract Infections) and HIV/AIDS.



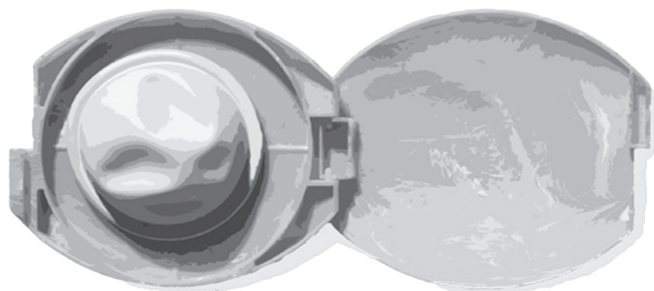
SPERMICIDE: A cream, foam, jelly, sponge or suppository that kills sperm. Spermicide may irritate your skin and vagina leading to a higher risk of getting UTIs (Urinary Tract Infections) and HIV/AIDS. *We no longer recommend the use of spermicide for this reason.*

Birth Control

Available at healthcare clinics:

DEPO PROVERA: A birth control shot that lasts 3 months. Possible side effects include heavy periods, no period, weight gain, and more. Once you get the shot, you're stuck for at least 3 months.

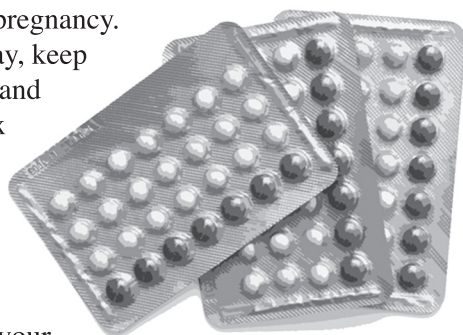
DIAPHRAGM OR CERVICAL CAP: Looks like a small rubber frisbee or cap you put in your vagina. It's used with spermicide which increases risk of HIV.



PATCH: A small patch that is stuck to your skin and releases hormones into your body. Change the patch once a week. It works like the pill and has similar side effects. The patch is not recommended for women who weigh over 200 pounds.

THE PILL:

A pill taken at the same time every day to prevent pregnancy. If you miss a day, keep taking the pills and maybe use latex condoms for the rest of the month to be extra safe. With some pill brands you get your period every month, with others you skip some months. The pill has health risks—ask your healthcare provider.



RING: A small ring that you put into your vagina. It releases hormones into your body for 3 weeks and then you take it out for the 4th week. The ring works like the pill and has similar side effects.

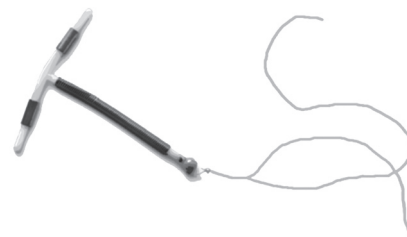
NOT recommended:

WITHDRAWAL: *We don't recommend.* Even guys who can tell when they're going to cum can't always pull out fast enough. Besides, when a guy's penis gets hard, some cum leaks out of it before orgasm (precum). Precum can get you pregnant and give you HIV or STDs.

FERTILITY AWARENESS METHOD: Charting your basal body temperature and cervical mucus to predict ovulation. Better for trying to get pregnant than to prevent pregnancy. *Not recommended for teens.*

IMPLANON: A small rod inserted under the skin of your arm that releases hormones into your body. Works for 3 years and then must be removed. Many health risks. *We don't recommend.*

I.U.D.: A small plastic thing that is put into your uterus. *Not recommended for teens* due to high risk of Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) and other health risks.



RHYTHM METHOD:

We don't recommend. Using your menstrual cycle to predict the days you can get pregnant, and then only having sex on the days you think you can't. This method is very unreliable and often results in an unwanted pregnancy.

To protect yourself from HIV and STDs, *always* use a condom with other forms of birth control.

Could I Be Pregnant?

How you get pregnant

A woman gets her period usually once every 21-40 days. In between her periods, the woman ovulates (she releases an egg). If the egg makes a love-connection with any sperm, it gets fertilized and she might be pregnant. However, if the egg doesn't hook up with any sperm, the egg leaves the woman's body and she gets her period like usual—no pregnancy. Sperm leave a guy's body in his cum and pre-cum. In order to fertilize an egg, the guy must ejaculate the sperm inside the woman's vagina.

So, women are most likely to get pregnant around the time they release an egg. Ovulation happens sometime around a week after your period until a week before your next period. But don't count on it! Your period might not be that regular, and ovulation can happen at any time, even during your period. Plus, sperm can live in a woman's body for days waiting for the egg!

So it's never "safe" to have sex (vaginal intercourse) without using birth control, like a condom for instance.

Some signs of pregnancy

- missing or having a very light short period
- tender and swollen breasts
- having to go to the bathroom a lot
- changes in mood and appetite
- "morning sickness"—nausea or vomiting for no reason, especially when you first wake up
- wet spots (discharge) in your underwear

Signs of pregnancy are different for each woman. You may have none of these signs or all of them. Also, many women get these symptoms when they're about to get their period.

If you miss your period and think you're pregnant, get a test.

Don't wait too long! The sooner you know, the more choices you have: either to get an abortion in the first 3 months (the safest kind), or to get early health care if you decide to go through with the pregnancy.

But what if...

We had sex during my period, could I be pregnant?

Yes. Even though this is the least likely time for you to get pregnant, it does happen. Women can ovulate at any time, even during their period. And menstrual blood can transmit HIV, so you should definitely practice safe sex during your period.

We had sex (but not intercourse) with our clothes on, could I be pregnant?

No. Sperm can't swim through clothes and into your vagina! If you had sex in your jeans, shorts, underwear or bathing suit (dry humping), there's no way you can be pregnant.

He came outside my vagina, could I be pregnant?

Probably not. Sometimes, if the guy cums outside, but very near the opening of the vagina, the sperm can swim their way inside. You risk pregnancy anytime his penis is inside your vagina. That's because guys don't always pull out soon enough before cumming and, even if they do, some cum (precum) leaks out before orgasm.

We had sex without birth control, now what?

If you had unprotected vaginal intercourse or your birth control failed (like the condom broke), you can wait to see if your period comes on time and get a pregnancy test if it's late. Or you have 5 days (120 hours) from when you had sex to get the morning-after-pill (Plan B or Emergency Contraception). If you are 18 or older, you can get Plan B at a drugstore without prescription. If younger, you need to get a prescription from a clinic. For info call the EC Hotline at 1-888-NOT-2-LATE.

Pregnancy Testing

Wait until your period is late before getting a pregnancy test. You can go to a health clinic or buy home tests in drugstores. If you buy a home test, follow the directions carefully. We suggest you go to a clinic for a simple urine or blood test for pregnancy. Free tests are done at most public health clinics. Watch out for bogus clinics, like Crisis Pregnancy Centers—they offer free tests, but are not real clinics. They hope to scare you out of choosing abortion if you don't want to be pregnant. It's your body and your choice to make!

Abortion

Not all women think abortion is cool for themselves, but all women have the right to make this choice.

Abortion is a simple medical procedure which ends a pregnancy. Throughout history, around the world, and in many religions, women have used abortion as a part of their healthcare. Other options for an unplanned pregnancy include adoption or keeping the child.

Access to Abortion

In the United States it is *legal* for a woman to get an abortion. But as a minor, you may need to ask your parents first. If you think they'll be supportive, definitely tell them. In some states, you can get an abortion without telling your parents. In others, there are Parental Consent or Parental Notification laws. Check with the Abortion Hotline (1-800-772-9100 or www.prochoice.org) for info on laws in your state.

Parental Consent

PARENTAL CONSENT laws mean that you will need to get permission from a parent or guardian if you are under a certain age, usually 18. Some laws allow for permission from another adult family member.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION laws mean that you will have to tell a parent if you are under a certain age, usually 18, but legally you don't need their permission. Unfortunately, many clinics still won't do the abortion unless your parents give permission.

If you are thinking about an abortion and live where there is a Parental Consent or Notification law, it's a good idea to call a clinic that does abortions. They can help you to get a "judicial bypass" to the law by explaining your situation to a judge. The judge can give permission for the abortion. But this can take time, so call right away. You can also go to a state without these laws, if you can't tell your parents.

Parental Consent laws are state laws. So *get involved* in your state! Contact Choice USA to find, or start, a prochoice group at your school (www.choiceUSA.org).



Women choose abortion for many reasons:

- we can't handle having a baby right now
- our parents would be angry or disappointed; we might get kicked out of the house
- having a baby might screw up finishing high school, going to college, or having a career
- the father is not going to help
- we don't have the money to take care of a baby
- having a baby isn't healthy for us or the baby
- we may have gotten pregnant by rape or incest

Any reason we have for choosing abortion is a good reason. These are our bodies and our lives. No one has the right to force us to have a baby, or to punish us for liking sex.

Abortion

Getting an abortion

There are several groups listed under Women's Healthcare in the *Resources* pages which can help you find a safe abortion clinic, pregnancy test, or help with money for an abortion.

If you choose a clinic on your own, watch out for bogus clinics like Crisis Pregnancy Centers. These clinics seem like health clinics, but aren't. They are run by anti-abortion groups and will try to scare you out of having an abortion. These fake clinics are listed in the yellow pages under Abortion *Alternatives*. Real health clinics are listed as Abortion *Services*.

Never have an illegal abortion—like one done in someone's home or by swallowing poisons! Abortion is safe when done in a legal clinic or hospital.

Although any medical operation can be scary, abortion has few risks. It can involve some cramping, and light bleeding afterward. It's a good idea to bring a friend along for support.

When you call to make an appointment ask:

- Do you need to tell your parents or get their permission first?
- Do they provide counseling and answer questions?
- Do they speak your native language?
- What should you bring with you?
- What are the possible risks and side effects?
- What type of anesthesia do they use? (Local anesthesia is best, because you will be awake during the operation, it's safer, easier to recover from, and costs less.)
- How much does it cost?
- Will they take a check, credit card, or only cash?
- Do they have a payment plan or reduced prices if you can't afford it?

Cost

Abortions cost \$350 or more. The costs and health risks increase after the first 3 months of pregnancy. And it's harder to get an abortion after 3 months, so get help soon! If you can't pay for an abortion, the Abortion Hotline will help you find a low-cost clinic and can sometimes help with money (1-800-772-9100 or www.prochoice.org).

RU486 Medical Abortion

RU486 is a newer method to end a pregnancy using medication instead of surgery. It must be done in the first 9 weeks after your last period started. You need to go to a health clinic to get the first pill or shot. A few days later, you will take another medication, which causes your uterus to contract and helps the pregnancy tissue to pass from your uterus. Within a week, you will begin to bleed like when you have your period. You may feel something like menstrual cramps, be tired, or be sick to your stomach. You must go back to the clinic after about 2 weeks for a follow-up to make sure everything worked.

The cost for an RU486 (medical) abortion is about the same as an early surgical abortion. But there are some other differences between the two types of abortions:

- RU486 doesn't use anesthesia or surgery
- RU486 is done very early in the pregnancy
- depending on where you live, it may be easier to get RU486 than a surgical abortion

Troubleshooting

If sex is so great, why aren't I having any fun?
Answers to some common problems & questions.

Is masturbation normal? Can I do it too much?

Masturbation is absolutely normal and healthy. Both men and women do it. You can't do it too much—unless it becomes painful. Masturbation is totally safe sex and it's a great way to get to know your own body. And remember girls, the clit is it! Find out what makes you feel good, and later you can show someone else how to give you pleasure.

I'm thinking of having intercourse for the first time. Does it hurt a lot for the girl?

The first couple of times you have intercourse it might hurt a little, or you might be sore afterward. If it hurts, tell your partner you want to stop for a moment. Try again more slowly and gently. Try a different position, like girl on top. Try using a lubricated latex condom, because it's slippery and less "rough" than skin. And use a *lot* of extra water-based lube! Remember, the first time is rarely fantastic. It takes time for us to learn what makes us (and our partners) feel good.

OK, but what if I'm not a virgin and my vagina still hurts when I have intercourse?

Sometimes there isn't enough "natural" lubrication (the stuff that makes your vagina wet when you're turned on) to make intercourse feel good. Buy a water-based lubricant at your drugstore and put some on and around your vaginal opening and vulva before having intercourse. Some people are allergic to the latex in a condom or diaphragm. Sometimes we can be nervous or scared about sex and that makes it hard for us to enjoy being touched. Don't rush, and don't let yourself be rushed. Until the problem is solved, have sex in other ways besides intercourse.

Why do I lose my erection when I fool around with my partner or try to put on a condom?

This is a *very* common problem that can *definitely* be overcome. It's usually a sign that you're nervous about how you'll "perform," or about sex in general. Relax and take the focus off of intercourse for a while. Play in other ways and soon you might find your problem solved.

I have a hard time cumming when I have sex with my partner. What can I do?

The best way to learn how to cum is to masturbate by yourself. Masturbation is fun and educational! Gradually, you will learn what gives you pleasure so you can let your partner know what you want—and vice versa. Don't assume that your partner knows what to do so you can cum. And remember, most women cum best by rubbing or licking the clit. When you have sex—any kind of sex—you may or may not cum. There's nothing wrong with this as long as you both feel satisfied.

I think I might have an STD or something. What should I do?

We are not doctors, and no book or web site alone can tell you whether or not you've got a sexually transmitted infection. You should listen to your body, and if you feel something is wrong, go to a health clinic. You can see a doctor or nurse at a public health clinic without telling your parents, and it's usually free. Public health clinics are often listed in the city or county government section of the phone book.

Women can get a vaginal infections even if they're not sexually active. Here are ways you can prevent some vaginal infections: Always wear clean cotton or silk underwear. Change pads and tampons often. Don't use perfumed vaginal products. Change condoms in between anal and vaginal intercourse. Pee before and after vaginal intercourse (if you can).

What if I'm allergic to latex?

If you're allergic or sensitive to latex, you might experience a skin rash, dry skin, itching, and—in rare cases—welts. People with latex allergies can use polyurethane condoms for men or women. Another solution is using two condoms—a latex condom over a lambskin one if the person wearing the condom is allergic; lambskin over latex if the other person has the allergy. Be careful when you wear two condoms—put a little bit of lube between them so they don't break, but not so much lube that the top condom slides off. You can use polyurethane gloves instead of latex ones, and plastic wrap (like Saran Wrap) instead of latex dental dams.

Resources

ACTIVISM

ACT UP NY (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power)
212-966-4873
www.actupny.org

CHOICE USA

1317 F St. NW, Washington, DC 20004
1-888-784-4494
www.choiceUSA.org

FEMINIST MAJORITY

1600 Wilson Blvd., # 801, Arlington, VA 22209
www.feminist.org

LESBIAN AVENGERS

www.lesbianavengers.org

MEN CAN STOP RAPE

PO Box 57144, Washington, DC 20037
202-265-6530
www.mencanstoprape.org

NATIONAL GAY & LESBIAN TASK FORCE

1325 Mass. Ave., NW #600, Washington, DC 20005
202-393-5177
www.thetaskforce.org

NOW (National Organization for Women)

1100 H St., NW, 3rd Fl., Washington, DC 20005
202-628-8669
www.now.org

AIDS RESOURCES

GAY MEN'S HEALTH CRISIS

119 W. 24th St., New York, NY 10011
212-367-1000 (info. also in Spanish and Creole)
www.gmhc.org

AIDS INFORMATION HOTLINE

US Department of Health & Human Services
1-800-448-0440
www.aidsinfo.nih.gov

NATIONAL MINORITY AIDS COUNCIL

1931 13th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009
202-483-6622
www.nmac.org

PROJECT INFORM (treatment information)

1375 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103
1-800-822-7422
www.projectinform.org

BOOKS / LIBRARIES

OUR BODIES, OURSELVES

34 Plympton Street, Boston, MA 02118
617-451-3666
www.ourbodiesourselves.org

ONE NATIONAL GAY & LESBIAN ARCHIVES

909 W. Adams Blvd., LA, CA 90007
213-741-0094
www.onearchives.org

DISABILITIES & SEX

SEXUAL HEALTH NETWORK

3 Mayflower Lane, Shelton, CT 06484
www.sexualhealth.com

DISABLED WOMEN ON THE WEB

www.disabledwomen.net

DRUG / NEEDLE EXCHANGE

NORTH AMERICAN SYRINGE EXCHANGE NETWORK (NASEN)

535 Dock St., Ste. 112, Tacoma, WA 98402
253-272-4857
www.nasen.org

EDUCATION / STATISTICS

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC)

Public Inquiries / MASO, Mailstop F07
1600 Clifton Rd., Atlanta, GA 30333
1-800-311-3435
www.cdc.gov

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH NETWORK

514 10th St., NW, # 400, Washington, DC 20004
202-347-1140
www.nwhn.org

SIECUS (SEXUALITY INFO. & EDUCATION)

90 John St., Suite 704, New York, NY 10038
212-819-9770
www.siecus.org

U.S. DEPT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

200 Independence, SW, Washington, DC 20201
1-877-696-6775
www.hhs.gov

Resources

GAY, LESBIAN, BI & TRANS

FAMILY EQUALITY COUNCIL

PO Box 206, Boston, MA 02133

617-502-8700

www.familyequality.org

GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER NATIONAL YOUTH TALKLINE

1-800-246-7743

www.glnh.org

NATIONAL YOUTH ADVOCACY COALITION

(Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Trans/Queer/Questioning Youth)

1638 R St., NW, # 300, Washington, DC 20009

800-541-6922

www.nyacyouth.org

!OUTPROUD! (Queer & Questioning Youth)

369 Third St., Suite B-362, San Rafael, CA 94901

www.outproud.org

PFLAG

(Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays)

1726 M St., NW, # 400, Washington, DC 20036

202-467-8180

www.pflag.org

HIV TESTS

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Call your local health department (or AIDS INFO

800-448-0440) to find the nearest facility.

HOME ACCESS (home testing kits)

1-800-HIV-TEST

www.homeaccess.com

LEGAL AID

ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union)

125 Broad St., 18th Fl., New York, NY 10004

212-549-2627

www.aclu.org

NATIONAL CENTER FOR YOUTH LAW

405 14th St., 15th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612

510-835-8098

www.youthlaw.org

LAMBDA LEGAL DEFENSE & EDUC. FUND

120 Wall St., Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005

212-809-8585

www.lambdalegal.org

RUNAWAY SERVICES

NATIONAL RUNAWAY SWITCHBOARD

1-800-RUN-AWAY

www.1800runaway.org

STD TESTS & FREE CONDOMS

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Call your local health department or the CDC

NATIONAL AIDS HOTLINE (800-232-4636)

to find the nearest facility.

VIOLENCE / HARASSMENT

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

1-800-799-7233

Deaf Access (TTY): 1-800-787-3224

www.ndvh.org

NETWORK /LARED (lesbian, bi women & trans)

617-742-4911

www.thenetworklared.org

RAINN (Rape Abuse & Incest National Network)

1-800-656-4673

www.rainn.org

BREAK THE CYCLE (specifically for youth)

1-888-988-TEEN

www.theSafeSpace.org

WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

ABORTION HOTLINE

1-800-772-9100

www.prochoice.org or www.earlyoptions.org

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION HOTLINE

1-888-NOT-2-LATE

www.not-2-late.com or www.go2planb.com

NATIONAL BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH IMPERATIVE

1420 K St. NW, #1000, Washington, DC 20005

202-548-4000

www.blackwomenshealth.org

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

434 West 33rd St., New York, NY 10001

1-800-230-PLAN

www.plannedparenthood.org