

Get the facts about sex from FPQ

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you decide



...whether to have it
...when to start
...to practise it
safely each time

Sex you decide

Having a relationship does not mean you have to have sex. Whatever you do, whether it's kissing, touching, oral sex or sexual intercourse, it should always be something that you and your partner both want to do.

Being able to make your own decision about having sex is important.

Sex is meant to be:

- something you decide to do when you are ready
- something that makes you both feel good
- something you can slow down, interrupt or stop at any time
- safe because you are both prepared to protect yourselves from sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancy
- a positive experience, not something to feel bad or guilty about

You can decide:

- when to start having sex
- if you want to have sex
- if you want to have sex every time
- what kind of sex you want to have
- with whom you want to have sex

Sex and trust

The most important thing in a sexual relationship is that you trust the other person and you feel like you can communicate honestly with them about:

- whether you want to have sex
- where and how you like to be touched
- what your limits are
- using effective methods of preventing STIs and unintended pregnancy
- past and present experiences which may put you or your sexual partner at risk
- your own and your sexual partner's personal, cultural and/or religious beliefs

What if I decide I don't want to have sex?

Not having sex is OK! You always have the right to decide if you want to have sex or not...**it is your decision.** There are other ways to be close, like kissing, cuddling, talking and holding each other. Sexual activity is about choice, intimacy and feeling good.

If you don't feel OK or safe, then it's probably not the right time for you to have sex.

Remember; no one has the right to pressure you into it. Even if you've had sex once, it doesn't mean you have to again. Some people might start off being sexual and then change their mind. This is OK too.

Forcing someone to have sex, or take part in any type of sexual activity that they don't want to, is a crime called rape or sexual assault.

Disclaimer

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FOR SEXUAL AND
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

What is safer sex?

Safer sex means:

- protecting your emotional and physical health
- feeling good about yourself and your relationships
- preventing STIs like genital herpes, genital warts, chlamydia, gonorrhoea, hepatitis B, syphilis and HIV
- avoiding unintended pregnancy

Preventing STIs

STIs can be passed from one person to another through any activity that involves the exchange of body fluids (blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and discharges from sores caused by STIs). This can happen through:

- vaginal, oral or anal sex
- close sexual contact (skin to skin)

How will I know if I have an STI?

Some STIs have symptoms like genital pain, sores or discharges from the penis or vagina, however, not all STIs have symptoms. You might have a STI and pass it on without knowing it.

You are at risk of STIs every time you have unsafe sex with someone if you don't know their sexual history. If you think you might have a STI, or been at risk of contracting a STI, get tested! Early diagnosis and treatment of a STI can help avoid complications and stop you passing it on to others.

Some STIs can cause long-term problems like infertility, and serious illness. STIs don't go away without treatment.

What is contraception?

Contraception means preventing pregnancy. It is the responsibility of both people in a sexual relationship.

To avoid unintended pregnancy, use contraception every time you have sex.

There are lots of different types of contraception, including condoms, pills, injections, diaphragms and implants. You can get advice from a health professional, or Family Planning Queensland (FPQ) to choose the contraceptive method most suited to you.

Only condoms offer protection from both unintended pregnancy and STIs.

If your period is late, get a pregnancy test as soon as possible.

Emergency Contraception

Emergency contraception (commonly called the morning-after pill) is available to women who are at risk of unintended pregnancy after sexual intercourse.

For example, if:

- contraception wasn't used
- contraception didn't work (condom broke or fell off, diaphragm problem)
- regular contraceptive pill was missed or forgotten

Emergency contraception pills are most effective if taken within 24 hours but can be used up to 5 days after unprotected sex. Remember, the sooner the better.

You can get emergency contraception from a chemist, doctor or Family Planning clinic.

Enjoy safer sex

- every time you have vaginal or anal intercourse, use a condom with a water-based lubricant (eg, KY Jelly, Muko, Wet Stuff). Oil or petroleum-based products (eg, Vaseline or baby oil) can weaken latex condoms and cause them to break
- use dams or condoms during oral sex
- use condoms to cover sex aids such as vibrators and dildos
- never RE-USE condoms, dams or gloves

To learn about using condoms and other contraception methods, see FPQ's factsheets at www.fpq.com.au



Get help and advice about safer sex issues from:

Family Planning Queensland clinics

Sexual Health clinics

Doctors

Women's health centres

Hospital outpatient clinics

Youth health centres

Gay and lesbian counselling services

www.fpq.com.au

www.health.qld.gov.au/sexhealth/

www.fpq.com.au