

1. How do girls get pregnant?

A man and a woman can conceive a baby when a sperm from a man joins up with an egg from a woman. Sperm are produced inside a man's testicles and ejaculated when he is sexually aroused. After a woman starts having her period, her body may release an egg every month (ovulation). If sperm are released inside a woman's vagina or even near her vagina, it can make its way into the woman's body and travel from the vagina into the uterus and fallopian tubes. When the sperm and the egg join in the fallopian tube, the fertilized egg travels to the uterus and attaches itself to the wall of the uterus where a baby will grow for approximately nine months.

2. Can I get pregnant the first time I have sex?

Yes. Once a girl starts having periods and producing eggs, she can become pregnant if she has sex.

3. What is an STD and how do you get one?

STD stands for Sexually Transmitted Disease. These are contagious diseases that are passed from one person to another during sexual activity (i.e. oral, vaginal and anal intercourse and genital to genital contact without penetration). STDs are caused by protozoa, bacteria or viruses. Many STDs such as herpes and HIV cannot be cured.

4. Don't condoms prevent pregnancy and STDs?

Condoms are not 100% effective in preventing pregnancy and STDs. Condom failure rates are higher for adolescents than adults. "Failing" refers to leaks, breaks, and incorrect or inconsistent use. Also, condoms provide little or no protection from genital herpes, chlamydia, and human papillomavirus (HPV). The only way to be 100% protected from unwanted pregnancy and STDs is for both partners to abstain from sexual activity until you're in a committed lifelong adult relationship.

5. When is it okay to have sex?

The best time to have sex is when you are an adult in a loving, committed, mutually faithful relationship with another adult person, which for most people is marriage. And, when you are physically, emotionally and financially prepared to handle all the outcomes of a sexual relationship, such as having a child(ren). By practicing abstinence until marriage, you won't have to worry about out-of-wedlock pregnancy, STDs and the other consequences of having sex.

6. How can I tell my boyfriend/girlfriend that I don't want to have sex?

It is a good idea to be honest from the very start and let your expectations for the relationship be known upfront. The ability to state your feelings is the key to open communication about the things that really matter to you, like not having sex right now. This is also important when sticking to your prevention plan on how to avoid being in situations that can easily lead to sex. If your partner is unwilling to honor your wishes to remain abstinent, you may choose to end the relationship right now. Respect for each other's wishes is what relationships should be built upon. If that is not there, find someone else to be with who agrees with your standards and respects you. Be secure in knowing what is best for you and don't compromise that for anyone!

7. How do I know if someone has an STD?

There is no "fool proof" way to know if someone has an STD. Many STDs do not show symptoms you can see at all or until months and even years later. A person may not be aware that they have a disease and are spreading it to others unknowingly.

8. What do I do if I think I may have an STD?

If you suspect that you may have an STD, you should stop having sex to avoid spreading the disease to others. Then you should go see your doctor (or to a health clinic) and ask to be tested for STDs. Your doctor will determine treatment if needed. If you are sexually active, you should get tested for STDs even if you use condoms. Diseases such as HPV and herpes can be spread even when using condoms

9. Are you saying that sex is bad?

No way! Sex is not bad, but it is an adult activity with serious responsibilities attached to it. Having sex as a teen can have some negative effects on your emotional well being as well as your physical health. Sex with someone who is committed to you for the rest of your life is a wonderful thing and is meant to be enjoyed. Bottom line is that sex is best saved for marriage to avoid problems that come from having sex too early.

10. Is there such a thing as "safe sex" (also referred to as "safer sex" or "protected sex")?

In a word, no. Condoms and other contraceptives are not 100% effective in preventing pregnancy or STDs. In fact, condoms have the highest failure rate of any birth control method. Condoms must be used consistently and correctly every time to provide protection from pregnancy or STDs. Some STDs are spread because a condom does not cover the entire genital area that can be affected by STDs, especially the viral STDs herpes and HPV that "live" on the skin. Condoms have been proven to greatly reduce the risk of HIV/AIDS if used every time. Condoms provide some protection for STDs such as herpes, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and HPV. You should not get the impression that condoms make sex safe. If you choose to be sexually active, it is very important for you to see a doctor.

11. How do you know if you're in love?

Four types of love have been defined. Almost everyone has experienced some type of love in his or her lifetime. Eros is the love of sex (lust) and material things. Agape is unconditional love. This is the type of love a husband would feel for a wife or vice-versa. Storge is love of family, wanting to keep them safe from harm. Phileo is the love for friends, wanting the best for your friends. A way to know which love you feel for different people is to think about your relationship with each person you have strong feelings for and see how that makes you feel. You can also talk to a trusted adult that knows you well enough to help you figure these things out. And remember, just because you are in love does not mean you should have sex because sex does not equal love nor love equal sex.

12. What are "risky behaviors?"

Risky behaviors are activities that can greatly increase the chance of a person being harmed. Five common risky behaviors for adolescents have been identified by leading governmental medical sources: tobacco, drugs, alcohol, sex and violence. Involvement in any of these behaviors can often lead to involvement in the others with hard lessons learned and possible life changing results.