

sextalk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

factoid

Among UA students who are single or casually dating, 1 out of 3 has never had sex - of those, 68% claim they are abstinent due to concerns about pregnancy. (2004 Health & Wellness Survey, n=1434)

Q. Here's the situation - my girlfriend and I had unprotected sex on day 14 of her menstrual cycle. I felt something that felt like the beginnings of an orgasm while I was deep inside of her. The feeling subsided and after a while I withdrew, and after some further stimulation ejaculated a full load outside of her vagina. She is now pregnant. It has been suggested by friends that I may not be the father - but this is a topic that I really don't want to broach with her, yet. What are the chances it was inert pre-ejaculate fluid?

A. From the information you've provided, it appears that you did everything necessary to make a baby with your girlfriend. Although the withdrawal method is considered a form of contraception, it is not a highly reliable one. For starters, there's the disadvantage of pre-ejaculate fluid (very possibly containing lively, active sperm) that is released well before you actually ejaculate. Add the component of introducing this pre-ejaculate fluid into a woman at one of the most fertile days of her menstrual cycle, and it's quite possible that this could result in a pregnancy.

Second, there's the issue of self-control. Withdrawal, when done effectively, means pulling out the very instant you begin to remotely suspect the possibility of orgasm. As you are aware, this is not always the case in practice. The estimated failure rate for typical use of the withdrawal method is approximately 20%. This means that 20 out of every 100 couples who use withdrawal as their sole method of contraception will end up with a pregnancy.

Before you confront your girlfriend on whether this baby is yours - thus challenging her fidelity to you - duly consider the very plausible role you played in creating this baby yourself. You're capable of making an informed decision to have sex, and part of that decision is being able to deal with the potential consequences of that choice.

There are numerous services available to assist pregnant women and their partners - on-campus there are the Campus Health Service Women's Health Clinic (621-9202) and Campus Health Counseling & Psychological Services (621-3334), off-campus there is Planned Parenthood (784-5826).

Have a question? Send it to sextalk@email.arizona.edu

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