

# sextalk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

**factoid**

Free Asthma education class at Campus Health on Tuesday, February 7th from 9am to 11am. Call 621-6516 to register and get a receive a free peak flow meter, free spacer, and more.

**Q.** I had sex with my girlfriend, our condom broke, and I ejaculated inside of her. She just got off the needle and is currently on the patch. Is it possible for her to feel pregnant four days later?

**A.** Early symptoms of pregnancy include nausea and breast tenderness, which also happen to be two of the main side effects from starting use of the contraceptive patch or oral contraceptives. It may be that your girlfriend is simply experiencing the effects of starting the medication.

We assume that the "needle" you describe is a reference to the injectable hormonal contraceptive Depo Provera. Injections are given every 11-12 weeks although the contraceptive effect may last a bit longer. As long as your girlfriend started her first patch by the time her scheduled injection was due, she should have had effective protection. Also, if she started the patch at least seven days prior to the encounter you mentioned in your question, the drug should protect her from getting pregnant.

Now that she's on the patch you may be interested to know that the Ortho Evra transdermal contraceptive patch contains the same hormones as oral contraceptives. Each patch last 7 days. A woman replaces the patch each week for 3 weeks during the month, then has a 7-day patch-free week when she will experience a "period".

Whenever a woman starts a new hormonal contraceptive she may experience feelings of breast tenderness and/or nausea (perhaps to the point of vomiting). This may explain why your girlfriend is experiencing feelings of pregnancy. If the symptoms persist, she may want to consider a pregnancy test to be sure.

Have a question? Send it to [sextalk@email.arizona.edu](mailto:sextalk@email.arizona.edu)

SexTalk is written by Lee Ann Hamilton, M.A., CHES, Melissa McGee, Ph.D., MPH & David Salafsky, MPH, health educators at The University of Arizona Campus Health Service.

