

# sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

## wildfact

**FREE ASTHMA EDUCATION CLASS** for students wanting to improve their quality of life with better asthma management: **Thursday, March 11 from 12-2:30pm**, in the Highland Commons Building B307 (3rd floor, SW corner).

## **Q** What is considered “high risk” when you are talking about sexual behavior for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)?

**A.** There are many factors that put a person at higher risk for getting an STD:

- unprotected anal or vaginal intercourse
- multiple partners (the more partners, the greater the risk)
- sex under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- sex with an injection drug user
- sex with a partner who has/had STDs
- sex with a partner who has ever traded sex for money or drugs

Conversely, the safest sex occurs in a long term, mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner. If that is not your situation, you can still reduce your STD risks:

**1.** Cover up: If you have sex with a penis (or own one yourself) put a condom on it, each and every time, from start to finish. Consistent and correct condom use greatly reduces transmission of STDs and pregnancy. Use latex dams for oral sex. You can buy condoms and dams at the Campus Health Pharmacy (and other stores) at a very low cost.

**2.** Be selective about who you sleep with. The fewer people you expose your body to, the lower your odds of getting an STD. Ask your partner about their STD history (easier said than done, but worth the awkwardness when compared to STD consequences, treatment, or worries). Get to know your partner’s testing status and what they do in their spare time (injecting drugs, perhaps). Also, be very aware that people may lie in order to have sex with you, so if you have a bad “gut feeling” about a prospective partner, pay attention to it, and skip the “mattress mambo.”

**3.** Get vaccinated against Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), Hepatitis A and B.

**4.** Enjoy low risk activities that don’t involve penetration (like fondling, kissing, body-to-body rubbing, or manual stimulation).

While no sexual activity is risk free (except, perhaps, masturbation), if you are going to get naked, horny, and intimate, you can lower your risks of STDs and still have sexy fun.



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

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