

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

wildfact

Free Asthma Education class led by UA Campus Health Service pharmacist and doctor on Wednesday, September 29th • 10am-12:30pm in Room B307. RSVP at 621-6516.

Q Hi, I was wondering how long sperm will survive if it has been ejaculated onto a couch?

A. Not very long. Semen dries fairly soon once it leaves the body. Estimates on sperm survival vary from several minutes to an hour, depending on the amount of semen and environmental factors (absorbency of couch

material, air temperature, etc.). If pregnancy is your concern, we are not aware of any students getting pregnant from contact with semen on a couch. Intercourse is really the most efficient (and more enjoyable) way to fertilize an egg.

Q I need help with something. I just got off my period and my boyfriend and I had sex. He didn't have a condom, but we had sex anyways. He pulled out, but I'm wondering if I have a high chance of getting pregnant.

A. Your situation isn't high risk for pregnancy for a few reasons listed below.

- The time during and after your period is a "low risk" time for pregnancy, if you menstruate and ovulate on a regular schedule. On the other hand, if intercourse happened a week after you got off your period, it would put you very close to ovulation time and your pregnancy risk would be high.
- Pre-cum doesn't usually contain sperm. When a man urinates, the acidic urine flushes out the urethra (the tube that carries sperm and urine) with alkaline semen. This helps to clear out lingering sperm and move them out of the penis. However, if your boyfriend

masturbated or had sex earlier in the day, and didn't urinate (which would wash out the sperm before having sex with you) then some sperm might still be in the urethra.

- Withdrawal (pulling out) **can** be a fairly effective method of contraception (85% contraceptive effectiveness in couples who use it regularly for birth control).

For more information on the pros and cons of withdrawal, visit the Campus Health Service or Planned Parenthood websites. Keep in mind that withdrawal exposes you to the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Using a condom will decrease your chance of pregnancy **and** STIs.



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

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